

Y3.C33/6:2462

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT  
HISTORICAL REPORTS ON WAR ADMINISTRATION  
OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP—SERIES 1  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

A REPORT ON  
THE OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP

UNITED STATES  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON: 1945

**THE OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP**

WASHINGTON 25

November 15, 1945.

THE PRESIDENT,  
*The White House,*  
*Washington, D. C.*

MY DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

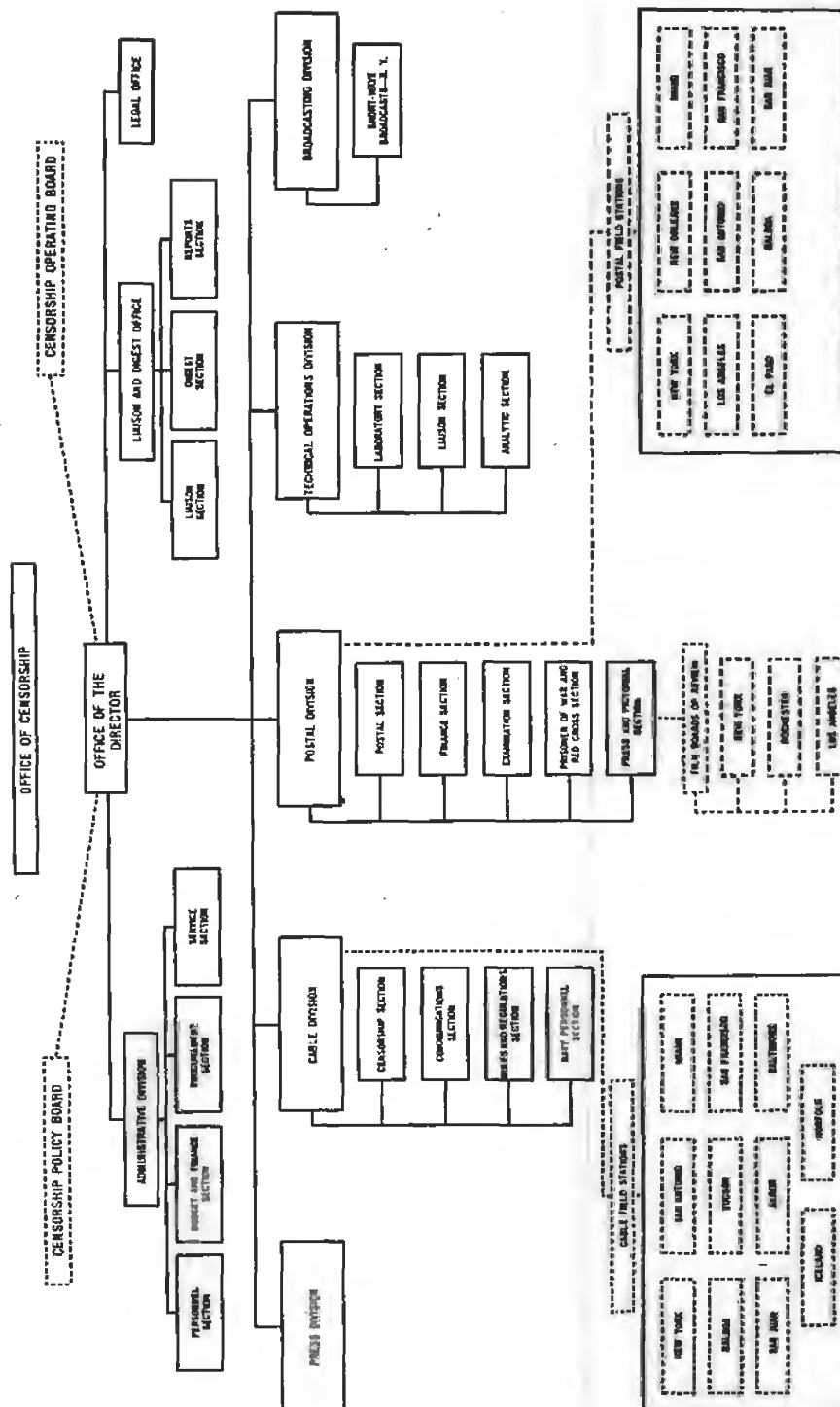
Pursuant to your letter of July 6, 1945, to the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, I herewith transmit to you A Report on the Office of Censorship as part of the administrative history of the Government during World War II.

Respectfully submitted,

BYRON PRICE, *Director.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Any approach to censorship in a democratic country is fraught with serious difficulties and grave risks. It is not too much to say that no operation connected with war merits more careful planning or more thoughtful administration.

The word itself arouses instant resentment, distrust and fear among free men. Everything the censor does is contrary to the fundamentals of liberty. He invades privacy ruthlessly, delays and mutilates the mails and cables, and lays restrictions on public expression in the press. All of this he can continue to do only so long as an always-skeptical public is convinced that such extraordinary measures are essential to national survival. The censor's house is built on sand, no matter what statutes may be enacted, or what the courts may declare.

Having in mind the normal tendency of censorship to feed on itself, erecting higher and higher bureaucratic barriers as the consciousness of great authority ripens, the old Romans decreed that no censor could hold office for a longer period than a year and a half. In our own country it should be understood that no one who does not dislike censorship should ever be permitted to exercise censorship. All planning for censorship should rest firmly on a determination to apply restraints in such a way as to preserve, rather than to destroy, free institutions and individual liberties.

The first and last principle to be remembered, then, is that censorship should come into being solely as an instrument of war. It must charge itself only with contributing to the success of armed combat. To the extent its operations are permitted to wander into other pathways, to the extent it concerns itself with the enforcement of peacetime statutes or the policing of political and personal foibles,—to that exact extent does it weaken its service to the nation's armed men on the field of battle.

Censorship's work may be said to divide itself into two separate tasks. The first is to deprive the enemy of information and of tangibles, such as funds and commodities which he can use against our armies and our navies. The second is to collect intelligence of many kinds which can be used against the enemy. No censorship can fail to go dangerously afield unless it holds rigidly and resolutely to these basic purposes.

Both in the stages of preparation and the later stages of execution any censorship based on these essentials is certain to encounter attack, open and by stealth, from some within and some outside of the government. There are those who believe sincerely, but without counting the ultimate cost, that the censor should operate according to a broader totalitarian philosophy; that he should undertake to suppress criticism of the government and conceal governmental blunders and delinquencies; that he should make fishing expeditions into private affairs having no possible connection with the war; that he should withhold from the Ameri-

can people, for policy reasons, information known to be available to the enemy; in short, that he should commit in the name of security all of the errors which have helped often enough heretofore to discredit censorships, to divorce their procedures completely from the dictates of common sense, and in the end to weaken greatly their effectiveness.

Unless and until the day comes when the form of our government is to be altered materially, it will not be wise or expedient even in time of national peril to undertake thus to reduce American citizens to a state of intellectual slavery. The task of prosecuting the war would be hindered, rather than helped, by any such attempt.

Censorship of press and radio deserves special mention, for it is precisely here that the entire operation faces its greatest danger of fatal error and consequent disruption. No more delicate or explosive an undertaking could be imagined. Within this area the censor must tread circumspectly, indeed, amid the apprehensions and suspicions of a publishing industry which guards almost fanatically its hard-won freedom from government domination, and a broadcasting industry which yearns mightily to attain similar liberties. This censorship ought to be voluntary, as a matter of principle, in a free country; and as a matter of practicality, experience has shown that a voluntary censorship, with all its undeniable weaknesses, can be fully as effective as such compulsory systems as those of Britain and Canada, where many flagrant violations have gone unpunished because public sentiment would not support punishment.

In this general field,—and let it be repeated that it is here that all censorship is most likely to make or destroy itself,—there is only one reasonable rule. Censorship of the dissemination of public information must hold unceasingly, day in and day out, to the single purpose of keeping dangerous information from the enemy. Editorial opinions and criticisms never can be brought under government restraint, and ought not to be, so long as our present form of government endures; and any censorial excursion into that realm would most certainly destroy the respect and confidence of the censored and lead to collapse of the entire structure.

BYRON PRICE, *Director*

NOVEMBER 15, 1945.

## I

Long before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the military services had been planning for wartime censorship of international communications. The Army undertook to develop a program for censoring mails entering and leaving the United States, and the Navy arranged for censorship of cable, radiotelegraph, and radiotelephone circuits.

On September 2, 1939, upon the President's declaration of a state of national emergency, Commander (later Captain) H. K. Fenn, USN, was assigned to give his full attention to planning for cable censorship. This officer, who later became Chief Cable Censor in the Office of Censorship, established the practice of bringing into active service selected Naval Reserve officers, so that they might be schooled, in advance, in the principles and operations of censorship. By December, 1941, some 400 officers had passed through the training course. A few already had been assigned to the Naval Districts to begin recruiting censorship staffs of their own, mainly reserve officers and enlisted men, with a few civilians. They established suitable quarters for censorship stations, made advance arrangements for furniture and supplies, perfected agreements with the communications companies, and in several instances even began actual monitoring, on a trial basis, of cable, radiotelegraph, and radiotelephone traffic. So complete were these arrangements that cable censorship went into action within an hour after the Pearl Harbor bombing.

The Army moved more slowly. Late in 1940, it was decided that special attention should be given to censorship by Military Intelligence, and Major (later Brigadier General) W. Preston Corderman, USA, was detailed to investigate. He brought in as his assistant a reserve officer, Captain (later Colonel) Gilbert C. Jacobus, who in January, 1941, was dispatched to Bermuda to make a study of British Censorship operations there.

Later, with the rank of Colonel, Corderman served for a year as the first Chief Postal Censor in the Office of Censorship. Captain Jacobus became his deputy during the early days and subsequently was the Army's chief censor in the European theater. To these two, principally, fell the enormous task of recruiting and organizing a civilian personnel of more than 10,000 in the Postal Division of the Office of Censorship, providing quarters and equipment, and formulating the regulations for examination of mail.

Upon the President's approval of a general wartime censorship program in June, 1941, Major Corderman greatly expanded the Army's censorship planning. On August 6 he opened a censorship school attended by 19 reserve officers, who then were assigned to the Corps Area Headquarters to begin recruiting and to make detailed plans. These officers barely had been able to begin by making contact with the local postmasters when war was declared. Unlike the Navy, the Army did not then or later assign enlisted men to Censorship.

The War Department took no formal action in respect to censorship on December 7, but the next day the Secretary of War ordered each Corps Area commander to inaugurate censorship of telephone and telegraph wires crossing the borders. The order made no mention of postal censorship, since that part of the program still was awaiting developments. Also on December 8, the President, in consultation with members of a Censorship Committee, designated the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, J. Edgar Hoover, to take temporary charge of all phases of censorship. On the same day, Mr. Hoover called a conference of the agencies most concerned.

Out of that and subsequent discussions emerged, by gradual growth, the structure which was to become the Office of Censorship. It was decided, for the time being, that censorship of the mails, as well as of telegraph and land telephone lines, should be a responsibility of the War Department. During the night of December 11-12 orders were forwarded from the Secretary of War to every Corps Area headquarters to begin postal censorship within 48 hours. The order was fulfilled nominally. All the postal censorship stations which had been planned were opening letters by midnight of December 13. But it was only a token censorship; the initial operations consisted simply of two or three Army officers sitting around tables in Post Office buildings and slitting open a few letters at random.

Meanwhile Congress passed the First War Powers Act, Section 303 of which authorized censorship in the following terms:

"Whenever, during the present war, the President shall deem that the public safety demands it, he may cause to be censored, under such rules and regulations as he may from time to time establish, communications by mail, cable, radio, or other means of transmission passing between the United States and any foreign country. Any person who, willfully, evades or attempts to evade, the submission of any such communications to such censorship or, willfully, uses or attempts to use, any code or other device for the purpose of concealing from such censorship the intended meaning of such communication shall, upon conviction, be fined not more than \$10,000, or, if a natural person, imprisoned for not more than ten years, or both; and the officer, director or agent of any corporation who knowingly participates in such violation shall be punished by like fine, imprisonment, or both, and any property, funds, securities, papers, or other articles or documents, or any vessel, together with her tackle, apparel, furniture and equipment, concerned in such violation, shall be forfeited to the United States."

To be Director of Censorship the President immediately appointed Byron Price, a newspaperman of life-long experience who had served for more than twenty years in Washington and subsequently was Executive News Editor and Acting General Manager of the Associated Press. By virtue of his professional background, he had a wide acquaintance among Washington officials,



Washington correspondents, and newspaper publishers and editors throughout the country. In announcing the appointment the President issued the following statement outlining the bases of Censorship:

"All Americans abhor censorship, just as they abhor war. But the experience of this and of all other nations has demonstrated that some degree of censorship is essential in war time, and we are at war.

"It is necessary to the national security that military information which might be of aid to the enemy be scrupulously withheld at the source.

"It is necessary that a watch be set upon our borders, so that no such information may reach the enemy, inadvertently or otherwise, through the medium of the mails, radio or cable transmission, or by any other means.

"It is necessary that prohibitions against the domestic publication of some types of information, contained in long-existing statutes, be rigidly enforced.

"Finally, the Government has called upon a patriotic press and radio to abstain voluntarily from the dissemination of detailed information of certain kinds, such as reports of the movement of vessels and troops. The response has indicated a universal desire to cooperate.

"In order that all of these parallel and requisite undertakings may be coordinated and carried forward in accordance with a single uniform policy, I have appointed Byron Price, Executive News Editor of the Associated Press, to be Director of Censorship, responsible directly to the President. He has been granted a leave of absence by the Associated Press, and will take over the post assigned him within the coming week, or sooner."

The President also signed an Executive Order creating the Office of Censorship. It went to the unaccustomed length of conferring upon the Director the power to censor international communications in "his absolute discretion." It created also a Censorship Policy Board and a Censorship Operating Board; the former consisted of several cabinet members and agency heads under the chairmanship of the Postmaster General, and the latter was to be appointed by the Director to coordinate the censorship interests of various Government departments.

One other step remained to make the charter of the Office of Censorship complete. Added to the presidential statement of December 16, which outlined general principles, and the Executive Order of December 19, which established authority over international communications, was an instruction by the President to the Director to supervise voluntary censorship of press and broadcasting.

The Director, in establishing his headquarters in a single room with a borrowed clerical staff, gave precedence to the problems of domestic voluntary censorship for a number of reasons. Nothing had been done in this field, whereas postal and cable censorship

already were under way and were in competent hands. The machinery for making decisions regarding press and broadcasting had to be created from the ground up. Requests for guidance were coming in day and night from many quarters, and snap judgments had to be made in many instances long before there was an opportunity to recruit personnel or formulate general principles. On January 15, 1942, preparations had reached a point where Codes of Wartime Practices were issued to the press and radio. The Codes listed items of information which the country's editors and broadcasters were asked not to disseminate because of the danger to national security.

The first formal regulations for cable and postal censorship were also completed during the first months of the new year, in long discussions with the Department of Justice, the Treasury Department and others. Regulations regarding technical data were approved by the President on March 13, 1942, the general Postal regulations on April 13, 1942, the general Cable and Radio regulations, the Radiotelephone regulations and the Rules for Operating Companies, which were instructions to the telecommunication companies, on February 19, 1942. These regulations dealt with the technical side of censorship of international communications. They were all made public and were accepted generally by the mail and cable users.

On January 30, 1943, the Cable and Radio, Radiotelephone and Postal regulations were revised on the basis of Censorship's experience and combined into one set of U. S. Censorship Regulations. They provided that "all communications may be condemned, suppressed, delayed, or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the censor without notice," which was in accord with the Executive Order conferring upon the Director the power to censor international communications in "his absolute discretion." General Regulation Seven listed subjects to which no reference, either open or hidden, should be made in international communications unless officially disclosed by appropriate governmental authority. This regulation closely paralleled the press and radio codes, and covered such items as ship, plane and troop movements, military operations, the location and description of fortifications and defenses, certain war production elements, the weather, movements of the President, etc. Other specific regulations prohibited the use of codes and ciphers, unless authorized, secret inks and other secret writings. The sending of mail to an enemy national was also prohibited except under certain conditions. Provisions were set forth for the censorship of film, prints and plates, scientific, technical or professional data, printed matter leaving the country and philatelic material. The regulations required postal, cable, and radio users to address and sign their messages so that both parties could be identified. Although the regulations stated that postal communications should be written in English if possible, there was no language restriction. Cable and radio messages, however, had to be in English, French, Portuguese or Spanish. The regulations listed nine commercial codes which could be used in cable and radio messages.

During the first weeks of the war, discussions were undertaken with British and Canadian Censorships. Mr. E. S. (later Sir Edwin) Herbert, Director General of British Imperial Censorship, arrived in Washington and had several long conferences with the Director of U. S. Censorship. The British had been operating Censorship for two years at many points around the globe, including Bermuda, Trinidad and Jamaica. It was now proposed to correlate the British, American and Canadian efforts, and on January 21 a tripartite agreement was signed with the blessings of the State Department, which had been represented throughout the discussions. In general, it was agreed that there should be a complete exchange of information among the three Censorships, and that insofar as possible the work would be divided to avoid duplication. It was stipulated further that a central clearing house of information be established within the headquarters of the Office of Censorship.

Out of the tripartite agreement between the American, British and Canadian Censorships was born the Division of Reports, having nothing to do with actual censoring, but ascertaining the needs of the various Government agencies for intercepted war information, and acting as the distributing agency. This naturally was an operation requiring secrecy and security. It was adopted as a fundamental consideration that no information would be distributed—or, indeed, collected or excised from communications—unless it related to the war. "What does not concern the war does not concern Censorship" had been a motto of the British, and it was adopted also as the governing policy of the Office of Censorship. Upon the form used for distributing information to federal agencies was printed the following notice:

"The attached information was taken from private communications, and its extremely confidential character must be preserved. The information must be confided only to those officials whose knowledge of it is necessary to the prosecution of the war. In no case should it be widely distributed, or copies made, or the information used in legal proceedings or in any other public way without express consent of the Director of Censorship."

While the Office of the Director was engaged with other matters, Cable and Postal Censorships went ahead steadily with their appointed tasks. Only occasional problems were referred to the Office of the Director. One such problem was the very large accumulation of mail at San Francisco. Much of this had been on the way westward across the Pacific when war broke out and shipping was forced to run for shelter. Neither space nor personnel to handle the load being available at San Francisco, it was decided finally to transfer most of it to the Canadian station at Vancouver. The first cable message which was referred to the Director's Office for decision came from a labor leader in Hawaii, and was addressed to his union headquarters in Washington. The

labor leader was complaining of infringement of civil rights under military rule in Hawaii. The Director instructed that the message be passed, on the ground that American citizens should not be deprived of the right of protest, even in wartime.

On January 5, headquarters was moved to the Apex (Federal Trade Commission) Building at Sixth Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W., which remained the home of Censorship throughout the war. By February 15, six divisions—Postal, Cable, Press, Broadcasting, Reports and Administrative—were all swinging into operation. The overall personnel had increased to more than 5,000 of which 3,100 were in the Postal Division and stations, and 1,819 in the Cable Division and stations, and the total continued to grow until the peak of 14,462 was reached in February, 1943.

On March 15, 1942, the Army and Navy personnel was formally transferred to the Office of Censorship from the War and Navy Departments, respectively. The personnel involved had been working completely under the authority of the Director of Censorship, but the actual administration had been carried by the older departments, because Censorship was not yet sufficiently staffed in its Administrative Division to take care of the necessary housekeeping. On May 23, sufficient space had become available in the Apex Building so that quarters of the Cable and Postal Divisions at Arlington were relinquished and the entire agency was housed for the first time under one roof.

United States Censorship, once organized, became part of an Allied network that blockaded Axis countries from a communications standpoint. Several Latin American countries set up effective censorships in accordance with Pan American agreements for the defense of the Western Hemisphere, and the Office of Censorship sent liaison representatives to those organizations. It also exchanged liaison officers with British Imperial and Canadian Censorships and sent a representative to Services des Controles Techniques, the French censorship, first at Algiers and then at Paris after the liberation of France.

The Allied censorships exchanged information about censorship techniques and also in the interest of the mutual war effort, gave one another pertinent information intercepted in communications.

As the combat responsibilities of the Army increased, the Secretary of War decided that Army officers serving in civilian agencies should be withdrawn. Accordingly, during the last months of 1942, all but a half dozen of the 150 officers who held key positions in Postal Censorship had to be replaced. One of those whose services were relinquished by the War Department was the Chief Postal Censor, Colonel Corderman. He was replaced by Lieutenant Colonel (later Colonel) Norman V. Carlson, formerly District Postal Censor in San Francisco, as Chief Postal Censor for the remainder of the war.

The first Assistant Director in charge of the Press Division was John H. Sorrells of New York, who obtained leave of absence as Executive News Editor of the Scripps-Howard Newspapers. He was a thoroughly experienced newspaperman who had been man-

aging editor of several dailies. On July 1, 1942, he was named Deputy Director and second in command of the entire Office of Censorship. On his promotion, he was succeeded as Assistant Director in charge of the Press Division by Nat R. Howard, who had been in Censorship almost from the beginning and was on leave as editor of the Cleveland News. Mr. Sorrells returned to his newspaper work on January 1, 1943, and Mr. Howard on July 5, 1943. Jack H. Lockhart, managing editor of the Memphis Commercial Appeal, who likewise had joined the Office of Censorship in its first weeks, took charge of the Press Division. He served in that capacity until May 1, 1945, when he also returned to newspaper work and was replaced by Theodore F. Koop. Mr. Koop, formerly a newspaper man and more recently on the staff of the National Geographic Magazine, had been Assistant to the Director from the outset. In that capacity he had been on active duty as a lieutenant in the Naval Reserve, but he went on inactive duty when he succeeded Mr. Lockhart. Lieutenant Commander Gordon E. Brown, USNR, who had served in the New York Cable Station and later in the Director's Office in Washington, became Assistant to the Director.

J. Harold Ryan of Toledo, Ohio, was the first Assistant Director in charge of the Broadcasting Division. He was vice-president and general manager of the Fort Industries, which operated six radio stations in the South and Middle West. When Mr. Ryan left Censorship on April 15, 1944, John E. Fetzer, of Kalamazoo, Michigan, who owned several radio stations in the Middle West, became the chief of the Broadcasting Division.

The administrative affairs of the Office were organized by James F. King, who came to Censorship as Executive Officer on January 1, 1942, from the Department of Labor. When he resigned on August 31, 1942, the Administrative Division was put under the immediate supervision of Mr. Sorrells, and later it was made a responsibility of Lieutenant Koop.

The Chief Postal and Cable Censors had full administrative control of their district stations, but the Administrative Division acted as an independent check on the legality and proper form of actions taken. The Administrative Division dealt with the Bureau of the Budget, the General Accounting Office, and the Civil Service Commission, and its job was to make certain that the programs being carried out by the operating divisions were in accord with the laws and regulations of those agencies.

Desiring to make certain that the Postal and Cable stations were operating along sensible and economical lines, the Director decided to bring into the organization a practical business man, personally responsible to him, who would visit all the stations from time to time and determine to his satisfaction that public funds were not being spent needlessly. He would not be in any sense an "efficiency expert" who would check on minor details, but rather would have a broad outlook, and his reactions would be those of a taxpayer. On March 9, 1943, Robert L. McKeever, a prominent Washington real estate man, was selected for this position as Special Representative of the Director. Mr. Mc-

Keever's visits to the stations resulted in immediate and long-range economies as he found instances where space and equipment could be utilized to better advantage and personnel could be reduced. On July 20, 1943, Mr. McKeever became head of the Administrative Division, in order that Lieutenant Koop could set up a new Liaison Office in the Office of the Director.

Administrative controls were gradually extended and work standards and formulae for determining personnel and fund requirements were developed, together with work load reporting. As a result, the determination of positions required for each division in Washington and each station became more accurate and personnel reductions in some areas were made possible. On February 23, 1944, the Director appointed a Management Policy Committee to survey the activities of the Agency. The headquarters committee established similar committees in each station. It sponsored numerous studies in headquarters and in the field, issued management policy communications to all District Censors and prepared quarterly reports to the Civil Service Commission.

During the initial months of its operation, the Office of Censorship was financed by a \$7,500,000 allocation from the Emergency Fund for the President. The Congressional appropriations for the following fiscal years of 1943-44-45-46 were, respectively, \$26,500,000, \$29,600,000 (including a deficiency appropriation of \$1,800,000 for overtime), \$29,700,000 and \$13,000,000. The Office, during its existence, actually spent an estimated \$16,484,531 less than the total appropriations, but half of this saving represents funds withdrawn by Congress after the Office ceased its censoring operations and began liquidating in August, 1945.

Only two major changes in the divisional framework of the Office occurred during its existence. In 1943, it became apparent that Censorship would have increased responsibilities in the field of counter-espionage as its work progressed, and the Technical Operations Division was created in August, 1943, to devote its entire attention to the subject. It operated with a small staff in Washington under the charge of Lieutenant Colonel (later Colonel) Harold R. Shaw, an Army reserve officer who had organized and directed the Postal Censorship Station in Hawaii. The division coordinated the work of the Censorship laboratories in combating the use of secret inks, and it also furthered censorship technique for detecting codes and ciphers. The Technical Operations Division established even closer liaison with the intelligence agencies of the Government, and the Allied Censorship attack on espionage was strengthened by inter-Allied conferences.

Censorship liaison with other Government agencies first was conducted by the Division of Reports, and liaison with other Censorships to a large extent by the Cable and Postal Divisions. The Division of Reports was originally headed by A. D. Burford, who withdrew on September 15, 1942, to return to his former duties with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. He was succeeded, as Assistant Director in charge of the Division, by Harold Keats, a retired lawyer and businessman who had joined the Postal Division some months before.

As the Office of Censorship developed, its liaison activities assumed increasing importance, and in July, 1943, they were taken into the Office of the Director because experience showed these activities could be most effectively conducted under the Directors immediate supervision and thereby on the highest level. The task of distributing intercepted information to Government agencies and other Censorships was closely linked with the liaison function, and on January 1, 1944, after Mr. Keats had resigned, the Division of Reports was abolished and its allocation work was also taken into the Director's Office.

Through its liaison with other Government agencies, Censorship could determine what sort of intercepted information the agencies required in furthering the war effort. A list of various topics of interest to the agencies was adopted as a guide for the censors, and the names of the agencies legitimately interested in each topic were set down opposite the item. A watch list was also established so that communications flowing through the Censorship stations could be checked against it. Among the names on the list were those contained in the Proclaimed List of Certain Blocked Nationals, the Government's official blacklist. In all its reporting activities, however, Censorship held to the view that it was not an investigative agency. It would deliver the raw materials to the intelligence agencies and others which had a legitimate war interest, but would not undertake to do intelligence work itself.

The Office of Censorship was aware of the possible dangers of placing in the hands of Government agencies economic information about legitimate American business. It took pains to indoctrinate the censors and those charged with distributing intercepted information with the basic principle that only material having a direct bearing on the war should be reported. As the Government's economic warfare program gained strength, there was less need of such information, and Censorship's reporting practices were adjusted accordingly.

These dangers, however, became particularly great in regard to the development of post-war industry, as American business men communicated abroad their post-war plans. The Director therefore approached both British Imperial and Canadian Censorships with a proposal to prevent by tripartite agreement the reporting of post-war plans of businesses in the United Nations or neutral nations where no enemy interest was involved. This agreement was signed on April 27, 1944, and the Director insisted that it be followed closely by every employee of the Office of Censorship.

Because of the exotic nature of its responsibilities, amid democratic surroundings, and the lack of experience and precedents, Censorship had to make many difficult policy decisions. The range of its interests was exceedingly wide. They embraced such normally unrelated subjects as the development of a new secret ink in Latin America, the morale of the German people under bombing and the publication of advertising relating to radar.



Some of Censorship's problems were considered by the Policy and Operating Boards which had been provided in the Executive Order creating the Office of Censorship. It was not necessary to convene them often, but they were helpful in occasional consultations. The Director, for instance, discussed with the Policy Board in November, 1943, some of the problems of censorship expected to arise during the latter stages of the war, particularly during the interim between the defeat of Germany and the defeat of Japan. A sub-committee of the Operating Board helped develop a plan under which Censorship Boards of Review were set up to censor motion picture films leaving and entering the country. One was established in New York City, to censor motion picture newsreels, one in Hollywood, to censor feature motion pictures, and a third in Rochester, N. Y., to handle amateur still and motion pictures.

In its relations with other Government agencies it was the studied policy of Censorship to remove causes of friction, whenever possible, before the friction actually developed. It was the further policy, in cases of misunderstanding, to handle the situation by the most direct means, namely, by personal consultation between the Director and the head of whatever other agency might be involved. In conformity with this general purpose, the Director inaugurated a practice of making written agreements with other agencies to deal with twilight zones of authority where a trouble might appear at some future time. Such agreements were made, for instance, with Army and Navy Public Relations, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Office of War Information, and others. The existence of the Operating Board helped greatly in this direction; it insured that in each interested agency there would be at least one person who had some conception of the problems and objectives of Censorship and who felt some obligation to approach these problems sympathetically.

Upon the creation of the Office of War Information, in June, 1942, it became apparent immediately that a twilight zone had been established in the field of official propaganda broadcasts, which were sent out by short wave radio. The OWI was empowered by the President to fix the policy of these broadcasts and, actually, control them. What were the proper functions of Censorship, under its own authorization to censor all outgoing communications? Also to be settled was the question of the relations of OWI and Censorship to the domestic press and radio. An agreement covering these points was signed by the Directors of the two agencies on November 15, 1942. Its substance was that outgoing OWI broadcasts would be censored for security only, and not for policy, and that in the domestic field, OWI would exercise an affirmative function only, and in no case would ask newspapers or broadcasters to withhold anything from distribution. A parallel agreement was negotiated later with the Office of the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs.

Censorship's public relations policies were shaped upon the thesis that it never would be possible, actually, to popularize censorship in a free country. To that end, the Agency at no time



had a public relations department. On the rare occasions when it was necessary to issue public announcements, these announcements were mimeographed and given out directly from the Office of the Director.

The First War Powers Act carried no specific authority for censorship of communications with the United States Territories, but the omission appears to have been a mere oversight. In ordering the inauguration of censorship on military grounds on December 7, 1941, in advance of Congressional action, the President said specifically that communications with the Territories also were to be censored. Subsequently, the omission of statutory authority caused apprehension both in Censorship and in the Department of Justice, and during 1942 an amendment to cover the gap was passed without objection by both Senate and House. While the amendment was awaiting consideration in conference, Governor Ernest Gruening of Alaska appeared at a specially called meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee to protest.

He argued that the censorship of Alaskan mail at Seattle was illegal and unnecessary, and that as a result information having nothing to do with the war was being taken from private communications and distributed to Government agencies. After the session, several Senators made public statements in support of Governor Gruening. On December 9, 1942, the Director was called before the committee. He explained that the censorship was being performed as a matter of military necessity under the President's constitutional powers as Commander-in-Chief. On December 14 the Attorney General and representatives of Military Intelligence, Naval Intelligence and the Federal Bureau of Investigation went before the committee. The Attorney General upheld the legality of the operation under the evidence of the benefits to national security. Meantime, the amendment regarding Territorial communications had been recalled from conference by the Senate and was again before the committee. The session of Congress, however, was in its dying days and although the public criticism died suddenly, no further legislative action was taken.

The problems involved in disseminating intercepted information again came to the attention of Congress in 1944. Miss Vivien Kellems, a Connecticut manufacturer, complained that excerpts from personal correspondence between her and Count Frederick von Zedlitz, a German then living in Argentina, had been quoted in a radio broadcast by Drew Pearson, Washington columnist, and later, on March 31, were read in the House of Representatives by Representative John M. Coffee. The Senate Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads opened an investigation of Censorship with particular reference to the use and unauthorized disclosure of information obtained through censorship. Senator McKellar, the chairman, and Senator Reed, a Committee member, expressed the opinion that the leak had not occurred in the Office of Censorship but in some Government agency to which intercepts had been sent.

The Director of Censorship had begun an investigation of his own as soon as the disclosures were made and was the first wit-

ness before a subcommittee headed by Senator McKellar on May 23, 1944. He described the method by which intercepts were prepared and distributed and outlined the steps taken to preserve security. He expressed the belief that the Zedlitz-Kellems material had come by way of some other Government agency, from censorship intercepts, and pointed out that Zedlitz' name was placed on the British Statutory List in February, 1942, and subsequently on the U. S. Proclaimed List. The Director recommended enactment of a statute to protect the secrecy of censorship information and formulae. A bill along these lines was later introduced in Congress, but it was never reported out of committee.

On June 10 the subcommittee called representatives of the State Department who testified they had no knowledge of any leakage of censorship information. One of the representatives was asked to produce the Department's copies of the Zedlitz-Kellems intercepts. He refused to do so without Censorship's permission. The Director was then asked to produce the originals, but he insisted on being subpoenaed, contending that the submissions contained (a) more material than had been made public, and (b) secret censorship markings. Accordingly, the subpoena was served, and the intercepts were shown to the committee in executive session.

On December 4, Miss Kellems testified at her own request. She described her acquaintance with Zedlitz and offered to state in executive session how she believed the excerpts from her correspondence with Zedlitz reached Messrs. Pearson and Coffee. She declined to give the information in public, however, and the subcommittee made no further investigation and submitted no report.

The greatest challenge to Censorship's capacity for keeping vital information from the enemy undoubtedly came during the weeks preceding the invasion of France. The Nazis knew from elementary observation that the British Isles were to be the springboard of the assault. The crucial questions were where and when and how it would strike the continent.

As early as January, 1944, some six months before the invasion, the Director discussed with the Joint Chiefs of Staff and British and Canadian Censorships special precautionary steps to be taken against alerting the enemy for the attack. On January 19, he sent a note to editors and broadcasters earnestly requesting them to keep in mind the Code provisions bearing on the situation and to take extra precautions regarding information from abroad which might tip off the enemy. Copies of the note also went to all Division Heads and District Censors, with the added admonition that every member of the staff be constantly on the alert and every executive give thought to the formulation and execution of whatever special precautions he might find applicable to his particular field of activity.

More specific steps were taken in April after a conference with British Imperial Censorship officials. The Office of Censorship adopted for the emergency period a general overall policy of placing greater emphasis on security considerations and less on the collection of economic, morale and similar information. The

percentage of incoming mail examined was decreased, and the percentage of outgoing mail examined increased, while outgoing telecommunications were censored more rigidly with emphasis on breaking up possible plain-language codes.

Shortly thereafter the Director discussed further restrictions with Joint Security Control, such as an arbitrary ten-day delay at the source of mail from Allied military personnel in the United Kingdom to the Western Hemisphere. He conferred with the Treasury Department to urge that Customs do everything in its power, including intensified cooperation with Travellers' Censorship, to attain the desired result, and the War Shipping Administrator was asked to remind merchant seamen entering or leaving United States ports of the penalties for carrying uncensored papers into or out of the country.

Meanwhile, the Director issued a statement reminding the public of what it could do to help protect military security at that decisive stage, and suggesting that the public remember the heavy penalties prescribed by Congress for carrying or sending a letter or message into or out of the country without submitting it to Censorship.

On June 6 General Eisenhower's forces swarmed onto the Normandy beaches, and as the invasion progressed with gratifying success, it became evident that the enemy had been kept in the dark on the time and place of attack. In less than a month after D-Day the Office of Censorship, with the concurrence of Joint Security Control, began relaxing the special precautions.

Even before Censorship set up the special D-Day precautions it had started planning for the adjustments that would be necessary after the defeat of Germany. British, Canadian and United States Censorships began discussing the subject in June, 1943, and it appeared that the ideal situation, if it could be attained, would be to impose a universal communications blockade against Japan, thus making it possible to abandon virtually all other censorship once Germany was out of the war. At the Director's suggestion, the Secretary of State explored internationally the possibilities of such a blockade, but the replies from some nations indicated that there was no hope for the plan's success.

In October, 1943, the Director asked the heads of the 28 Government agencies, which were receiving intercepted material from Censorship, what categories of information could be dispensed with upon termination of hostilities with Germany as Censorship turned its full attention to the continuing war against Japan. Their replies gave the Director a preliminary pattern of post-V-E-Day requirements, and on November 20, 1943, he discussed the whole matter with the Censorship Policy Board, as previously mentioned. An outline of projected Censorship developments resulted from that discussion and was the basis of more planning in ensuing months as the Office of Censorship gave more thought to the future.

The consistent success of the Allied push across France after the Normandy invasion impelled the Director to call a conference of District Censors and Division Heads in Washington in the

summer of 1944. Out of that meeting came a detailed plan of operations realignment. It was called the X-Plan, and was to go into effect on X-Day—the day on which (a) an armistice with Germany was signed, or (b) the occupation of Germany became substantially complete, whichever occurred first. It gave every Censorship executive a definite basis for preparing to make the necessary operational and personnel reductions after Germany's defeat and was founded on the reasoning that Censorship not only could but should eliminate, as soon as possible, all restrictions on international communications which no longer served a positive security purpose.

As the Allied military situation continued to improve in the fall of 1944, the decision was made to close the Chicago Postal Station at the end of the year, for whatever necessary work it was doing could be absorbed by other stations. Changing conditions also had diminished the value of territorial cable and mail censorship in some areas, and by agreement with the Military, the censorship of telecommunications between Alaska and the United States was taken over by the Army Signal Corps, and in December the Seattle Cable Station ceased all its censoring activities and closed completely within a few weeks. In January, also by agreement with the Military, the Seattle Postal Station likewise stopped censoring, with mail from the Alaskan Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands being routed to the San Francisco Station for examination.

Conditions in the Caribbean Area also had changed sufficiently to permit the Office of Censorship to withdraw completely from the censorship of territorial communications between Puerto Rico and the United States, with the exception of radio and radio-telephone communications, which, by their very character of interceptibility, had to continue to be censored.

A Presidential proclamation in 1944 terminated martial law in the Territory of Hawaii, and an Executive Order gave the Commanding General there authority to regulate the transmission of information between the military area and points outside of the area, and between the islands within the military area. The Director, therefore, proposed that the Commanding General assume active censorship of all communications, and that the Office of Censorship withdraw from all censorship between Hawaii and the continental United States and its possessions. On April 1, 1945, this was done, and the Office of Censorship transferred to the Commanding General the cable and postal stations in Hawaii.

Meanwhile, Censorship's planning for adjustments after Germany's defeat was carried forward, and on May 1 a revised X-Plan was sent to all the district stations. Seven days later the fall of Germany was officially announced, and the plan went into immediate execution.

A revised set of U. S. Censorship Regulations, devised to retain only those restrictions that were necessary to continue the war against Japan, already had been sent to the Budget Bureau for final clearance prior to approval by the President. It embodied, for the information of the public, the relaxations for which the X-Plan provided changes in Censorship's operations.

An example of the relaxations permitted by the end of the European war concerned communications regarding shipping. While German U-boats were roaming the Atlantic, information about all ship movements naturally had to be stringently limited. But soon after V-E Day the U. S. Navy declared the Atlantic free of hostile shipping. This meant that the Atlantic, and adjacent waters like the Mediterranean and Baltic Seas and the Gulf of Mexico, became a non-combat area. Most of the Pacific, of course, remained a combat area, but the distinction between combat and non-combat waters enabled Censorship to lift all restrictions on merchant ship movements that were entirely within the non-combat area.

This and other censorship modifications after V-E Day, such as removal of the ban against registered (code) cable addresses in certain communication channels, were in accord with Censorship's desire to help in the speedy resumption of legitimate world trade. The end of German resistance also prompted swift and drastic revisions of the two Codes which were the backbone of voluntary censorship of the domestic press and radio. On V-E Day, only a few hours after the President had made his proclamation, the Director issued notes to editors and broadcasters which amended the Press and Broadcasting Codes by eliminating some sections. Later in May an entirely new Code, which merged the Press and Broadcasting Codes, was distributed. The censorship of motion pictures, including newsreels, was put on a voluntary basis on June 9, and the Boards of Review were disbanded.

The execution of the X-Plan brought about substantial reductions in Censorship personnel. In the some three months between the German and Japanese defeats, the total force dropped more than a third, from some 9,500 to 6,000 civilian and military positions.

Even before V-E Day, the Office of Censorship had been planning its eventual liquidation at the close of the war. When it was decided to close the Chicago Postal Station, in the fall of 1944, the Administrative Division compiled a booklet entitled "General Instructions for the Closing of Field Stations." An Administrative Officer in Charge of Closing Operations was also appointed. Using the X-Plan and the Closing Instructions as a guide, the Administrative Division drafted a plan in four parts, covering (1) things to be done at once, (2) things to be undertaken on V-J Day and completed not later than V-J plus three days, (3) a description of personnel requirements and duties during liquidation, and (4) a revised edition of the Instructions for Closing. This plan became the V-J Book, and was issued to the stations in the field and the divisions in Washington in July.

The Director had already recommended to the President that on V-J Day the Office of Censorship cease its censoring activities, when, at 7 p.m. on August 14, the White House announced the Japanese acceptance of Allied surrender terms. But there were indications that V-J Day would not be formally proclaimed at once because of the time required to arrange the signing of the surrender terms. It was obviously unnecessary, how-

ever, for censorship to continue through that period, in the light of the complete Allied mastery of the general military situation. Accordingly, on the afternoon of August 15, 1945, the President signed the following directive to the Director of Censorship:

"In accordance with the recommendation submitted by him on June 27, 1945, the Director of Censorship shall on August 15, 1945:

- "1. Declare voluntary censorship of the domestic press and radio at an end.
- "2. Direct that the Office of Censorship cease at once the censorship of all international communications.
- "3. Give 30 days notice to all employees of the Office of Censorship, except for a small group needed for liquidating the Agency."

So Censorship immediately went out of business.

The Director's order to cease censoring was on its way by teletype to the stations within a few minutes, while the great news services were informing the country's editors and broadcasters that voluntary censorship was no more.

Censorship's demobilization proceeded on schedule according to the V-J Book during the weeks following the end of censoring. The middle of September about 95 per cent of the staff left the Office of Censorship.

Shortly after the demobilization began the Director accepted a temporary assignment as the President's personal representative to make a study of the relations between the American occupation forces in Germany and the German people. The Director appointed Assistant Director Koop as Deputy Director to act in his absence.

In September a program for disposing of all condemned mail was completed in accordance with a schedule which determined what items should be released, returned to sender or destroyed. A bill providing for the disposition of condemned parcel post and printed matter had been passed by Congress and approved by the President on December 22, 1944, and pursuant to it, contents of parcel post packages that were of use to the War Department were purchased by the War Department, while bound books were given to the Library of Congress and other prints were destroyed.

Censorship records having future reference value were sent to the National Archives. The filing of intercepts in Censorship's possession, however, was handled in a special manner. The Director felt that information taken from messages by wartime censorship should not be generally available for peacetime use. With Presidential approval, all but one copy of the intercepts were destroyed. The single copy was placed in a special Archives file, which would be opened only by order of the President.

On September 28 the President signed an Executive Order which formally abolished the Office of Censorship as of November 15, 1945.

## II

Postal Censorship was a mass operation, physically the greatest task of the Office. With well over a million letters a day passing through its stations, the Postal Division at its peak required more than 10,000 employees. They were the policemen of the international sea and air mail channels.

The President's approval of a general censorship blueprint in June, 1941 was the signal for the War Department to establish a Censorship Branch in its Military Intelligence Division and to prepare actively to supervise Postal Censorship in event of war. Virtually no new planning had been done in that field since World War I, when Postal Censorship was operated by the Post Office Department under the control of a Censorship Board representing five federal agencies.

Major Corderman, who headed the Censorship Branch, promptly started a training school for reserve officers. At its completion these men were assigned to various Corps Area headquarters to select office space, obtain data on mail routes and volumes, and organize censorship stations on paper. Some were sent to British and Canadian censorship stations to acquire technical information and report on procedures.

Original plans called for Postal Censorship to include supervision of telephone and telegraph lines across the Mexican and Canadian borders. This project eventually was transferred to the Cable Division, but on December 8, as previously stated, the Secretary of War ordered censorship of these circuits under Major Corderman's direction, and during the night of December 11-12 the War Department called on Corps Areas to begin Postal Censorship within 48 hours. Since the embryo stations had been anticipating this notification, they were able to begin work at once.

Recruiting of civilian personnel had scarcely been started and had to be stepped up a hundredfold. From a wide range of applicants the Civil Service Commission provided housewives, school teachers, retired business men—anyone with good general intelligence or some specialized knowledge who could be entrusted to act on his own judgment, plus general regulations and consultation with supervisors. It was particularly important to obtain translators in some 100 principal languages, for it would have been impractical to require that all letters be written in English.

It was upon the examiner, the man or woman who actually read the mail, that fell, of course, the heavy responsibility of detecting information that should not be permitted to go through and information that should be reported to the Government in furtherance of the war effort. Each examiner not only had to be intimately familiar with Censorship Regulations and Censorship practices affecting his work, but also had to sustain a minute-to-minute alertness against open or hidden breaches of security in the mail he was censoring. Examples of such breaches are discussed in the last chapter. Training of the examiners to qualify them for their important job was standardized to the limits of efficiency, and the usual procedure was to give each recruit a

week's basic training in the station, followed by two weeks of intensive work at special tables before they were assigned to posts on the examination floor. Examiners who were to handle specialized material, such as business or financial mail, required additional training and courses were set up in the various specialities. But the most effective training was found to be on the job, by the supervisors and consultants in special fields, who observed the examiner's work and were available to answer their questions.

Moreover, applicants from the outset had to be investigated carefully to make certain of their loyalty to the United States. By the time they had finished a few days of concentrated training, however, enough had been given this character clearance to place the stations on more than a skeleton basis. Most of the censors, of course, were women, who traditionally have been preferred for the job.

When the War Department decided to recall most of its officers from Censorship, a search was undertaken for high-caliber executives from private business to become District Postal Censors and to fill headquarters' administrative positions. A group of nearly 100 was recruited and given a month's training in the New York station, after which they were assigned to positions throughout the organization. Later another group of junior executives was put through a similar course at New Orleans.

At the peak of operations the Office of Censorship had District Postal Stations in New York, Miami, New Orleans, San Antonio, El Paso, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle and Chicago, as well as overseas stations in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Balboa, Canal Zone, and Honolulu, Hawaii.

Most of the mail passing through the stations in the continental United States of course originated in or was ultimately destined for points in the continental United States and was called U. S. terminal mail. The New York Station examined some mail between Latin America and the United States, and was the gateway for mail with the European neutrals. The Miami Station processed South American air mail and was also responsible for all mail to and from the Caribbean area. New Orleans handled the bulk of the sea mail to and from South America, for during the German submarine menace in the Atlantic these mails were carried in and out of New Orleans rather than New York. San Antonio handled Mexican mail and Central American air mail. Sub-stations along the Mexican Border examined documents carried by trans-border travelers, and the El Paso and Los Angeles District Stations concentrated on mails to and from Mexico. At San Francisco mails with Pacific points were examined, and most of the work at Seattle concerned mails with Alaska. The Chicago Station devoted most of its examination to Canadian mails, as well as printed matter originating in that area.

The overseas stations processed much mail which transited those points on the way from one foreign country to another. Under the British navicert system, ships plying between Latin America and neutral Europe were required to call at Allied control points for examination of the mail they carried, and the New



York Station received some of this mail, while most of the rest of it was handled at the British Censorship Station in Trinidad. The San Juan Station of U. S. Censorship examined trans-Atlantic air mails, which were made available by agreement with the carrier. San Juan also received some mail which was terminal to Puerto Rico. The Balboa Station, and a station at Cristobal, C. Z., which operated under it, read much mail between South American countries, Balboa handling mostly air mails and Cristobal mostly sea mails. The Honolulu Station examined mail in and out of the Hawaiian Islands, with the San Francisco Station also examining some of the mails between Hawaii and the continental United States.

The great mass of the mail was censored in the stations, only a relative trickle of it being examined in the Postal Division at headquarters, which handled items that were referred because they presented special problems. By a review of censoring actions taken in the field, however, the Postal Division kept in touch with what the stations were doing, and of course basic censoring treatment was in accordance with instructions from Washington.

Postal Censorship normally did not examine letters passing through the Army and Fleet Post Offices; in other words, mail to and from members of the United States armed forces. This was handled by Army and Navy censors, who occasionally asked for assistance from the Office of Censorship to clear away any unusual accumulation. The Postal Censorship stations, however, had their hands full reading the personal, business, and financial mail entering and leaving the United States, as well as correspondence to and from enemy and American prisoners of war, and mail in other international channels which was interceptible at San Juan, Balboa, or Honolulu.

The question often has been asked whether the Office of Censorship read every letter which passed through its stations. The answer is that no large censorship ever has been physically able to do a 100 per cent job of postal examination. The percentages necessarily were an Office secret, but they were based on the types of mail and the countries of origin or destination.

All envelopes, before being opened, were checked against a watch list to determine whether any suspicion was attached to the names of sender or recipient. Enemy agents naturally changed the return name and address with virtually every communication, but peculiarities of handwriting, composition or stationery frequently enabled the sorters to pick out their letters.

In general, the postal censors found an extremely small percentage of material to delete from the letters they read. If the excisions would be too great, they often returned the entire letter to the sender with a statement as to the reason it could not go forward. This practice helped educate the public and provided greater security in the long run.

The small amount of military mail examined by Postal Censorship contained a higher percentage of unmailable information than that from private citizens. The obvious reason, of course, was that soldiers and sailors had access to more material of

interest to the enemy. A campaign was conducted among merchant seaman to insure greater security in their correspondence—a necessity to protect their own lives as well as the safety of their ships.

Mail ordinarily was not delayed by Censorship for more than 24 hours. The public, which in general accepted the necessity for censorship with good grace, sometimes was irked by the slowness of communications, but it should be pointed out that in wartime transportation is disrupted and, leaving Censorship entirely aside, mail does not move with its customary speed.

One regulation which was in effect until the defeat of Germany and which caused irritation in business circles, because its need was not understood, prohibited the transmission by mail of confirmation copies of cablegrams to most countries. Had these copies been permitted, the surveillance exercised by Cable Censorship would have been cancelled, for there was no way to make certain that the same deletions were made in the mailed copies as were made in the original cablegrams.

For obvious security reasons Postal Censorship also forbade the use of codes or ciphers, secret inks, and other secret writings. Because the discovery of enemy espionage activities was a primary aim of all censorship, the Postal stations maintained laboratories in which letters were tested for secret inks as well as being examined for visual content. Search also was made for "open codes"—prearranged, apparently innocuous words or phrases which conveyed hidden meanings. To prevent the transmission of secret information, the postal censors also had to stop such things as international chess games, for the symbols might or might not be entirely innocent. In all this work the stations received direction and counsel from the Technical Operations Division, which is discussed in the preceding chapter.

Special handling was required for two types of mail—registered and diplomatic. To safeguard the former in accordance with standard postal procedures, the censors in the registered mail section were bonded and each letter was checked in and out on special postal forms. The communications of accredited diplomats, as well as official mail of the Government, were not opened. This so-called "privileged" mail was the only correspondence not subject to censorship.

Of the utmost importance to economic warfare were the activities of the business and finance censors who studied the vast amount of commercial and banking mail passing through international postal channels. Long before the attack on Pearl Harbor, the President had issued Executive Order No. 8389 which prohibited a wide variety of financial and property transactions with designated countries or their nationals. The Government also had instituted the Proclaimed List of Certain Blocked Nationals. Censorship proved a major method of making these restrictions effective and of denying the enemy a vast amount of money, goods, and economic information. It also reported to the appropriate Government agencies information about the use, transfer or acquisition of assets of the enemy or benefiting

the enemy. Within a short time after censorship was invoked business and finance tables, manned by individuals who had experience in trade and banking, were handling business and financial mail in the stations.

Postal censorship joined in the blockade of German-dominated Europe by detecting transactions which might result in the Nazis obtaining vitally-needed commodities. Information of this nature was rushed to London for use by the Joint Blockade Control Committee, which directed the policing of the Atlantic and adjacent seas. A special group of examiners was set up to study communications pertaining to enemy smuggling of diamonds, both gem and industrial stones.

To block dealings in postage stamps in which the Axis or its nationals had an interest, Postal Censorship established a philatelic control unit. Since complete suppression of the international stamp traffic would have brought financial ruin to a large number of innocent, loyal American dealers, a plan was worked out with the Treasury and other Government departments for the control of stamp shipments into and out of the country. A committee of prominent philatelists assisted, and a program was developed whereby no shipment of postage stamps could be made from the United States to any country except Canada without an Office of Censorship permit.

A permit system also was established early in the war for the export of technical data. In cooperation with the Board of Economic Warfare (predecessor of the Foreign Economic Administration), this material was examined and, if not objectionable, was given a license for export. In the case of technical magazines, a system was evolved whereby one copy was approved and additional copies were wrapped by the publisher's specially designated employees.

In order to prevent the inclusion of secret messages in copies of newspapers or magazines, Postal Censorship required that all printed matter addressed to persons in neutral European countries be mailed directly by the publisher rather than by an individual, as long as the war against Germany was in progress.

Allied with censorship of publications leaving the country was the examination of film moving into or out of the United States. As previously stated, Boards of Review were established at New York, Hollywood and Rochester, New York. They censored for propaganda content as well as for restricted military information, because of the tremendous propaganda power of the motion picture medium.

Although general communication with enemy territory was prohibited, the Director of Censorship, with the President's approval, authorized two types of correspondence which could be sent without individual licenses. Under the first, the Red Cross was permitted to transmit purely personal messages of not more than 25 words between relatives in the United States and an enemy country. More than two million such messages passed through Censorship. Under the second, the rules of the Geneva Convention were followed to authorize correspondence with prisoners of war.

These channels ending behind the enemy lines were potentially perilous to security, and special care had to be given to the examination of all the communications. The number of German and Italian prisoners held in the United States, plus the American prisoners in Germany and Japan, became so large that censorship of this mail developed into one of the Postal Division's major functions.

Because it was necessary to centralize records of all prisoners, censorship of all prisoner of war mail was concentrated in the New York station. The Provost Marshal General of the War Department, who supervised prisoner of war camps, cooperated in establishing regulations for the handling of this correspondence, and the State, Navy and Post Office Departments, the Foreign Economic Administration, and the Red Cross also were consulted frequently.

The Office of Censorship later granted licenses for communication, under certain restrictions, between the Vatican in Italy and the Apostolic Delegation in Washington, for the Catholic Church was able to reach some destinations which were inaccessible to the Red Cross. Other plans were worked out for correspondence with Belgium and the Netherlands, when they were enemy-occupied, and with Switzerland, when it could be reached only through enemy-occupied territory, but in every case extra precautions were taken to prevent disclosures of dangerous information, and in general the Office of Censorship used its licensing authority sparingly.

Besides policing postal channels, Postal Censorship worked with the Customs Service in checking travelers entering or leaving the United States. Letters, papers, and other documents carried by these persons were picked up by the Customs officials and handed over to censors stationed nearby. Rapid handling was necessary in order not to delay the travelers. To speed up the operation, travelers were encouraged to have their documents pre-censored, by submitting them to Censorship in advance of leaving the country. Arrangements were made with the State Department and the airline companies to include information on pre-censorship facilities in instructions issued to prospective travelers. Censorship also publicized the facilities in newspaper stories released by the district stations, and placards were posted in hotels, postoffices, waiting rooms, etc.

The overall operations of Postal Censorship, extensive as they were, were kept adjusted to changing needs as Allied military successes removed some channels of communication from the dangerous category. One example of this was in regard to the blockade of Germany. When the Allies had overrun France and pushed further northward in Italy, the Nazis naturally found themselves physically cut off from various geographical points through which they might try to penetrate the blockade. Obviously Censorship could then devote less effort to its blockade work. And when Germany was defeated, Postal Censorship, like the rest of the Office of Censorship, realigned its operations, according to the previously discussed X-Plan, and turned its full

attention to the war in the Pacific. On the afternoon of August 15, 1945, Postal Censorship joined the other divisions in terminating all censoring, and whatever unexamined mails were then in the stations or at headquarters were returned unopened to the postoffice.

### III

Censorship of telecommunications—cablegrams, radiograms, and international telephone calls—was complicated by the speed with which these messages moved. Improper information in a letter at least was subject to some mail delay before it could be received and utilized by the enemy, but the cable and radio circuits negated the time factor. Fast work was required by the censors, and they approved legitimate communications in a matter of seconds or minutes.

Captain Fenn had immediate charge of the telecommunications censorship not only during the active planning stages before the war but also throughout the war and until shortly after the defeat of Japan, when he was succeeded by Commander W. M. B. Freeman, USNR, who had served as his assistant.

The first phase of pre-war preparations was the planning of the technical features of a Cable Censorship network which would adequately protect the security of telecommunications passing between this country, its territories and possessions, and other nations in time of war. This planning involved a careful study of all international telecommunication circuits, the determination of suitable locations for Cable Censorship stations and the preparation of tentative Cable Censorship Regulations for the public as well as instructions to the commercial communication companies. Detailed plans for the organization and operation of the various Cable Censorship stations in the continental United States and overseas were drawn up. After the completion of the foregoing, detailed training manuals for the instruction of officers and enlisted personnel were prepared, published and stored against the day when personnel would be available for training.

The second phase involved planning with the commercial communication companies for the submission to Cable Censorship of all electrical communications immediately upon the commencement of hostilities. The mechanics of getting thousands of telecommunications each day from the communication companies into the hands of censors and back into the possession of the communication carriers presented many difficulties if the operation was to be accomplished with the smallest amount of delay and with a minimum risk of error. Varying plans, each suited to local conditions, were devised for use at the different Cable Censorship Stations. For example, at New York practically all communications passed between the companies and the censorship station through pneumatic tubes. This method was found to be fast and utilized a minimum of manpower. At San Francisco, however, the major communication companies were separated from

each other and from the Cable Censorship Station by distances of several city blocks and pneumatic tube equipment was not available.

The third phase of preparation was the procurement of the necessary quarters for the Censorship Stations and the facilities for their instant operation in the event of war. The task of procuring quarters and supplies with neither funds available nor a knowledge of the date on which they would be required was an enormous one. It was roughly the equivalent of establishing a business organization consisting of a head office, eight major branch offices in the continental United States and four overseas offices and employing an anticipated 3000 persons, all upon a limited capital and without knowing when business might commence. Housing alone presented a formidable problem. Fortunately in New York very desirable space was obtained in the International Telephone and Telegraph Company Building at 67 Broad Street. This building housed the International Telephone and Telegraph Company facilities, and the Radio Corporation of America and Western Union centers were near-by. The skeleton force then comprising the New York Station moved on July 15, 1941 from the Naval Headquarters at 90 Church Street into small offices in the I. T. & T. Building. These quarters were ultimately expanded during the war to four complete floors. The quarters obtained in San Francisco were in the Furniture Exchange Building at 180 New Montgomery Street, which, though physically not adjacent to the communication companies was the best that could be done.

The fourth and probably the most important phase of prewar preparation was the procurement and training of adequate personnel for the Cable Censorship system. Because of the wide variety of business and commercial telecommunications subject to censorship, it was obviously necessary to obtain a staff of censors thoroughly conversant with all aspects of the world of commerce and trade. The selection of prospective Naval Reserve officers to fill these requirements was commenced in 1939 and through the diligent efforts of the officer procurement organizations throughout the country several hundred officer candidates were selected from the fields of shipping, insurance, finance, exporting, importing and the press. In addition, there were obtained prospective officers with legal training as well as men versed in personnel work, supply and administration.

The procurement of these officers was a gradual process and the task of training them for Cable Censorship was commenced in November 1939 at a censorship school established in the Navy Department at Washington. This school was later transferred to New York and remained in operation until the outbreak of hostilities, at which time, as previously noted, approximately 400 officers had been graduated. The training consisted of instruction in the technique of Cable Censorship and general instruction in the specialized fields of commerce. In the latter phase some of the candidates themselves were used to instruct their fellow pupils in their specialties. In addition to instruction in censorship, the

prospective officers were given brief indoctrination in Naval methods and etiquette.

After their training had been completed, these officers were sent back to their civilian occupations, subject to call to active duty upon the outbreak of a war. Thus was built up a pool of trained officers immediately available when needed.

The attack upon Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 found Cable Censorship ready to commence effective operation. The principal stations at New York and San Francisco went into operation immediately and were censoring telecommunications within a matter of hours after the blow had fallen. Smaller stations at Miami, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Seattle went into operation almost as rapidly, and within a day or so after the attack full coverage was achieved. In the early months of 1942 the stations at Tucson, Arizona and San Antonio, Texas were transferred by the Army to Cable Censorship and became part of the network. Cable Censorship also had overseas stations in Iceland, Puerto Rico, the Canal Zone, and Hawaii.

In spite of the extensive advance preparations of Cable Censorship, the first few months of its operations necessarily produced a number of problems which could not have been successfully anticipated prior to the outbreak of hostilities. These problems were met and overcome as they arose, with the result that within a few months the Cable Censorship network was operating harmoniously.

As the organization developed into a well coordinated team, it became possible to effect certain economies, both in personnel and in operating costs. Surplus personnel, particularly the younger officers, were released from Cable Censorship duty from the summer of 1942 onward. The need of the Fleet for young officers and enlisted men became more acute as the war progressed, and in the late spring of 1943 the Navy Department ordered the Chief Cable Censor to release to sea duty all physically-qualified men under 30 years of age. The men thus released were replaced very largely by enlisted and commissioned Waves.

From time to time it was found that the efficiency of the continental Cable Censorship network could be maintained and still reduce the number of district stations. Accordingly, in January 1944, it was determined that the amount of traffic being handled by the District Station at New Orleans did not warrant the continuance of a major station in that city. Censoring functions of the New Orleans station were transferred to the District Cable Censor at Miami, and a small field station was continued in New Orleans to maintain contact with the communication companies and with the public.

A previously mentioned economy was effected in December, 1944, when the responsibility for censoring all telecommunications between Alaska and the Continental United States was ceded to the Alaska Communications System, operated by the U. S. Army. This move made it possible to discontinue the District Cable Station at Seattle. The Pacific Northwest area was then placed under the general jurisdiction of the station at San Francisco.



Also in December, 1944, it was found that Cable Censorship activities in Los Angeles no longer warranted maintaining a major station there, and accordingly, on December 4, censoring functions were transferred to the District Cable Censor at Tucson. As in the case of New Orleans, a small Field Station was continued in Los Angeles for the purpose of relaying communications from the operating company stations to the censors in Tucson. On April 1, 1945, the District Cable Station at Honolulu, T. H. was transferred from the Office of Censorship to the Territory of Hawaii Military Area, as previously pointed out. The station at Reykjavik, Iceland was closed on April 23, 1945 in view of the successful progress of the war in Europe.

The objective of Cable Censorship was two-fold, the first being to withhold from the enemy information of value or comfort which related to the war effort of the United Nations, and the second to gather from cable communications military and economic information of value and assistance to other agencies of the Government in prosecuting the war. In the performance of the first phase of the objective the accomplishments of Cable Censorship were necessarily of a negative nature; i. e., achievement rested in what was withheld by the censors. For the purposes of description of the operations of Cable Censorship, the several major types of traffic are outlined topically below:

Perhaps the most important responsibility of Cable Censorship was the safeguarding of the communications concerning the movement and operation of the merchant fleets of the United Nations. To achieve this end, Cable Censorship endeavored to prevent the disclosure of information which would permit the enemy to capture or destroy Allied shipping, and to prevent the disclosure of general information concerning merchant shipping which would permit the enemy to deduce therefrom the distribution and concentration of Allied military forces or the nature of future military activities. It was recognized that the efficient employment of the merchant marine depended in a large measure upon the rapid transmission of legitimate shipping communications, and accordingly every effort was made to expedite them. At the outset of the war, Cable Censorship adopted a very restrictive policy concerning shipping communications, but with the progress of the war, it was found possible to eliminate certain restrictions and to lighten the burdens imposed by others. In June, 1944, after consultation with the Navy Department and the War Shipping Administration, Cable Censorship modified the application of U. S. Censorship Regulations by removing the prohibition against association of a named vessel with the nature of its cargo, and also lifting the ban on association of cargo and port of loading or discharge. At this time the movements of vessels of less than 1,000 gross tons in the Caribbean Area were exempted from the regulation. Following the defeat of Germany, Censorship restrictions upon communications relative to movements of merchant shipping in the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean were virtually eliminated, leaving the regulations in force only in respect to vessels within or proceeding to or from the Pacific-Asiatic Area.



It is believed that the efforts of Cable Censorship in respect to the protection of merchant shipping were wholly successful. No instance of loss or damage to a merchant vessel through interception of communications was reported throughout the entire war. Of notable assistance in achieving this record was the establishment early in 1942 of a system through which ship owners and operators could communicate with their branch offices and agents in secure cipher. This system was devised jointly by the Navy Department, the War Shipping Administration, and Cable Censorship. It consisted simply of the so-called "split message" method, by which shipping communications were divided into two segments, the first containing the confidential information, and the second containing unrestricted information. The first segment was transmitted in cipher through U. S. Navy channels and the second in plain language via commercial companies. This system proved to be a workable method of secure communication, and at the same time placed a minimum burden upon the communication facilities of the Navy Department.

The second phase of Cable Censorship's mission in respect to merchant shipping was the reporting of information to the Navy Department and the War Shipping Administration. This phase was particularly important in the early days of the war when the overseas reporting systems of both agencies were incomplete. During that period Censorship furnished to the agencies much valuable information concerning movements and employment of Allied merchant ships. Of even greater value to the Navy Department was the information from cable intercepts concerning the movements of neutral merchant ships. All telecommunications relating to this subject were copied by the District Cable stations and forwarded by rush teletype to the Washington headquarters where they were relayed immediately to the Navy Department. These intercepts, coupled with information from other sources, constituted a daily broadcast to the Fleet concerning the current location and probable future employment of neutral shipping.

A letter on this subject of December 2, 1943, from the Office of Naval Intelligence to the Chief Cable Censor is of interest:

"Your attention is invited to the considerable amount of intelligence obtained through copies of so-called shipping messages.

"In addition to the routine ship position messages, much information is gleaned from cargo messages which frequently disclose ship movements. Bunkering reports not only confirm ship movements but permit a check to determine whether ships take excess supplies. Passenger reports, individual requests for reservations both aboard ship and at destination, and sundry messages giving anticipated sailings are also helpful.

"Perhaps the censors in various stations do not realize just how beneficial their work really is. The seemingly unimportant and uninteresting message will often tie in with some

other bit of information to form a significant picture. The consideration of your censors in apprehending and forwarding pertinent messages and the close cooperation of your entire section in furnishing us information is highly appreciated."

Cable Censorship gave particular attention throughout the war to telecommunications relating to insurance on the Allied merchant marine and on war projects in this country. Early in 1943 the Attorney General issued a letter to the insurance industry stating that the sending out of the country of information for the purpose of placing insurance and reinsurance might be construed as a violation of the espionage act because it revealed the status of various war projects. Inasmuch as a substantial share of both marine and non-marine insurance written in this country is placed in the London market, this ruling gave particular concern to American insurance companies who were in the habit of placing all or a portion of their risks in England. As a result of numerous conferences between the chairman of Lloyds of London, who came to this country, and the interested agencies of the United States Government, a plan was devised to permit the continuance of insuring in the British market without the disclosure of vital information.

This plan became known as the "Bico Plan" (British Insurance-Communications Office). The Bico office was established in New York by the British insurance companies and served as a medium through which was passed the minimum information required for the placing of the insurance. The operation of the plan involved a complicated system of symbols, etc., from which the British underwriters were able to determine the nature and extent of their risk, but which disclosed no vital information even though intercepted by the enemy.

In connection with finance and trade communications, it became apparent at the outbreak of hostilities that control measures would have to be undertaken to prevent the use of the financial facilities of the United States in ways harmful to the national defense, to prevent the liquidation in the United States of assets looted by the enemy from occupied countries, and to prevent substantial stores of funds from falling into enemy hands to be used to purchase critical materials or to pay for propaganda, sabotage, or subversive activities within the United States and the other United Nations. To accomplish these ends, certain executive orders were issued by the President and were implemented by rules and regulations promulgated by the Treasury Department.

Enforcement of these measures rested in a very large degree upon the control of communications concerning international business transactions. A careful watch over such communications was maintained throughout the war, and by close liaison with the Treasury Department numerous illegal transactions were frustrated and the rights and property of the citizens of this country were protected. Dealings between individuals and firms in the United States and persons on the Proclaimed List were

prohibited, except pursuant to a Treasury license. Cable Censorship was one agency through which the Treasury Department insured the enforcement of its decrees.

Under the general title of "Personal Communications" fell a number of special types, mainly those dealing with the Red Cross, Internees and Detainees, Refugees, Military Personnel deployed overseas, and attempts at indirect communication between Allied and enemy territory via neutral areas.

The value of the services of the American Red Cross and its affiliated organizations abroad in relieving the hardships of war through handling of communications between persons in this country and their relatives in enemy and enemy-occupied territories cannot be denied. There existed, however, a very definite danger that this channel of communication might be used by enemy agents for transmission of espionage messages.. Accordingly a careful watch was maintained by Censorship, with the cooperation of the Red Cross.

The personal communications of enemy aliens and sympathizers interned or detained in the U. S. constituted a potential source of danger. Cable Censorship adopted a highly restrictive policy in respect to such communications, as it was felt that the status of these persons did not warrant the extension of any special privileges.

Throughout the war the telecommunications of refugees from the enemy-occupied areas of Europe and the Orient were carefully watched for attempts at espionage communication, as it was suspected that the enemy would endeavor to disguise its agents as bona fide refugees. A major step in insuring the security of this traffic was to require that, unless there was some good reason to the contrary, such messages be passed through one or another of the established refugee organizations.

One of the continuing problems of Cable Censorship was the vast number of electrical communications between United States forces overseas and their friends and relatives at home. The view of Cable Censorship was that members of the Armed Forces were entitled to every communication privilege consistent with maintaining the standards of security prescribed by the Army and the Navy. A major development in this field was the establishment in the summer of 1942 of the so-called "EFM System." Under this system the communication companies agreed to transmit at a flat charge of 60¢ a message containing any three of some 130 fixed texts. They were known as Expeditionary Force Messages, and their texts were designed to express the normal types of personal traffic such as safe arrivals, birthday and holiday greetings, congratulations, etc. This service was available from its inception to Army personnel throughout the world and ultimately became available to shore-based Naval personnel. For obvious reasons it could not be extended to more than a small percentage of the Naval personnel afloat. The security of the location of military units was achieved by the use of coded addresses from which neither the persons in this country nor the enemy could determine the location of specific personnel. The

entire system was the result of the closest cooperation between the communication companies, the War and Navy Departments, and Cable Censorship.

One of the greatest potential devices of enemy espionage was so-called "indirect communication" between the United Nations and enemy territory via neutral areas. In view of the patent dangers in the use of open code to convey hidden meanings, cable censors adopted a highly restrictive policy in treating this type of traffic.

After the defeat of Germany, Cable Censorship's practices and restrictions were modified to meet the changed military situation, and on August 15, 1945, all censorship of telecommunications ceased and all uncensored communications in the hands of Censorship were returned unread to the communication companies.

## IV

Besides censoring all international communications entering or leaving the United States, the Director of Censorship was requested by President Roosevelt to "coordinate the efforts of the domestic press and radio in voluntarily withholding from publication military and other information which should not be released in the interest of the effective prosecution of the war."

This was a formidable assignment. In 1917-18 a voluntary press censorship had existed after a fashion, but the whole experiment was characterized by many misunderstandings and much bitterness so that those responsible for its administration conceded it to be a failure. Moreover, commercial broadcasting in 1941 was entering its first war as a partner of the press, and its facilities for instantaneous transmission of news created new censorship problems.

It was apparent that the Office of Censorship could have taken over, had it so desired, Government public relations on a large scale. In fact, several of the top publicity men attached to Federal departments sent drafts of proposed announcements to the Director for censorship. But the Director chose to stand aside. The material was returned promptly with a statement that the Office of Censorship did not propose to censor the Government.

Back of this decision lay a conviction that eventually publicity and outright propaganda could not be separated, and that Censorship had an important legitimate field of operation wherein its reputation and its effectiveness should not be jeopardized or weakened by involvement with propaganda. Out of this philosophy grew the basic principle that the Office of Censorship would not undertake to suppress the publication or broadcast of any information given out officially by a qualified Government source. This principle of discrimination came to be known as the principle of "appropriate authority."

There were, of course, critics of voluntary censorship in both military and civilian quarters. For the most part they were

people who believed in the strict regulation of the press in peace as well as in war. These critics sometimes pointed to individual news stories to bolster their contention that information of value to the enemy was being printed despite the Code of Wartime Practices. The Office of Censorship looked into the cases which were brought to its attention, and found that there was appropriate authority for the disclosures or that the information had first been published abroad and consequently was available to the enemy before it reached the United States. In most of the cases involving appropriate authority, the latter turned out to be a cabinet member, a high military or civilian official, or even the President. It was obvious that the responsible official had weighed the security factor against the need of informing the public and had found the latter consideration overwhelming.

Before any actual program of voluntary censorship could be formulated, it was necessary that administrative facilities be created. Considering the nature and delicacy of the operation, it was axiomatic that the personnel must be not only highly competent but also of unquestioned professional standing. It became a major policy that the staffs administering voluntary censorship should be made up only of men who were "drafted," that is, selected by the Office of Censorship itself and brought to Washington on a leave of absence basis, mostly at a reduction in salary, from the active ranks of publishing and broadcasting.

On December 26, 1941, the Director announced the appointment of Mr. Sorrells to head the Press Division and Mr. Ryan to head the Broadcasting Division. Mr. Ryan was selected by a committee representing all sections of the broadcasting industry, which the Director had requested to nominate a division head.

The two new assistant directors had the immediate double task of making staff selections and of preparing voluntary Codes of Wartime Practices which would form the basis for self-censorship of the press and radio. This latter assignment involved long discussions with the War, Navy and other departments and agencies, in addition to consultation with the industries. It involved also many basic decisions, foremost among them being the determination that the Codes must be aimed at the one objective of keeping information from the enemy.

Just as the Codes were nearing completion it was discovered that the Weather Bureau was preparing to issue, after consultation with some Army and Navy officers, a long and complicated code of its own regarding weather information. This venture finally was abandoned at the urgent request of the Office of Censorship, which argued that confusion would result if any other agency asked newspapers and broadcasters to withhold information.

Eventually the way was cleared all around, and the Codes of Wartime Practices for press and radio were issued on January 15, 1942. These documents set forth in simple terms subjects which contained information of value to the enemy and which, therefore, should not be published or broadcast without the appropriate authority of a qualified Government official.

The next problem, once the Codes were prepared, was to get copies into the hands of all interested persons and to obtain their cooperation in adhering to the restrictions. At that time the United States had more than 2,000 daily newspapers; 11,000 weekly and semi-weekly newspapers; 900 commercial broadcasting stations; 6,000 technical, professional and scientific publications; 5,000 industrial, commercial and financial publications and news letters; 16,000 commercial house organs; hundreds of other magazines, and thousands of church, school, fraternal and educational publications.

To assist in the voluntary censorship program, the Press Division established an Advisory Board composed of representatives of national and regional publishers' and editors' associations. It also selected one editor in each state to act as a "missionary" in spreading the gospel of voluntary censorship among his colleagues. These "missionaries" came to Washington twice at their own expense to confer with Censorship officials. Their leadership and that of the Advisory Board were invaluable in winning the loyal cooperation of editors throughout the country.

In addition to sharing with the press the problems of withholding news that might aid the enemy, American broadcasters were confronted with the need for caution on other types of programs. Many stations had been accustomed to playing musical numbers on request, with the announcer giving the name of the person making the request. This had to be stopped as a security measure, for it was always possible that an enemy agent might get a secret signal to a colleague abroad by the simple device of having a station broadcast "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree," dedicated to Cousin Sarah, at 7:45 p. m., January 23. Similarly, "man-in-the street" interviews had to be curtailed, lest an enemy agent get possession of the microphone and transmit a message with a hidden meaning. Then, too, it was necessary to supervise programs in foreign languages; it was decided not to prohibit the latter, because they furnished ready means of keeping various foreign-born Americans in touch with the country's war needs and aims.

The staffs of the Press and Broadcasting Divisions were on call 24 hours a day to answer inquiries and to provide counsel on borderline cases arising from Code requests. Never were there more than nine newspapermen and six radio men on the rolls in Washington. There were no branch or regional offices, for divided authority unquestionably would have resulted in divided opinions on the security in specific news stories. A paper in Los Angeles, for example, might have been authorized to print facts that a regional office in St. Louis would have deleted. This small, cohesive organization cost the taxpayers approximately \$100,000 a year. The Director once called it the best investment in security ever made by the United States Government.

From the outset editors and broadcasters gave unstinted cooperation in complying with the Code's requests. There were mistakes, of course, but they were inadvertent. Never during nearly four years of war was the Code or the principle of voluntary cen-

sorship successfully challenged. Even when editors disagreed with the need for withholding certain information, they abided by the recommendation of the Office of Censorship that it not be printed.

Although the Code did not create a news or editorial black-out, it pointed out that voluntary censorship meant some sacrifice of the journalistic enterprise of ordinary times. It added the hope and expectation "that the columns of American publications will remain the freest in the world and will tell the story of our national successes accurately and in much detail."

The first edition of the Press Code asked that the following information be withheld except when made available officially by appropriate authority:

**TROOPS:** The general character and movements of United States Army, Navy, or Marine Corps units, within or without the continental limits of the United States—their location, identity, or exact composition, equipment, or strength; their destination, routes, and schedules; their assembly for embarkation, prospective embarkation, or actual embarkation. Any such information regarding the troops of friendly nations on American soil.

(NOTE.—The request as regards location and general character does not apply to troops in training camps in Continental United States, nor to units assigned to domestic police duty.)

**SHIPS:** The location, movements, and identity of naval and merchant vessels of the United States in any waters, and of other nations opposing the Axis powers, in American waters; the port and time of arrival or prospective arrival of any such vessels, or the port from which they leave; the nature of cargoes of such vessels; the location of enemy naval or merchant vessels in or near American waters; the assembly, departure or arrival of transports or convoys; the existence of mine fields or other harbor defense; secret orders or other secret instructions regarding lights, buoys, and other guides to navigators; the number, size, character, and location of ships in construction, or advance information as to the date of launchings or commissionings; the physical setup or technical details of shipyards.

**PLANES:** The disposition, movements, and strength of Army or Navy air units.

**FORTIFICATIONS:** The location of forts and other fortifications; the location of coast-defense emplacements, or anti-aircraft guns; their nature and number; location of bomb shelters; location of camouflaged objects.

**PRODUCTION:** Specific information about war contracts, such as the exact type of production, production schedules, dates of delivery, or progress of production; estimated supplies of strategic and critical materials available; or Nation-wide "round-ups" of locally published procurement data



except when such composite information is officially approved for publication.

Specific information about the location of, or other information about, sites and factories already in existence, which would aid saboteurs in gaining access to them; information other than that readily gained through observation by the general public, disclosing the location of sites and factories yet to be established, or the nature of their production.

Any information about new or secret military designs, or new factory designs for war production.

**WEATHER:** Weather forecasts, other than officially issued by the Weather Bureau; the routine forecasts printed by any single newspaper to cover only the State in which it is published and not more than four adjoining States, portions of which lie within a radius of 150 miles from the point of publication.

Consolidated temperature tables covering more than 20 stations, in any one newspaper.

(NOTE.—Special forecasts issued by the Weather Bureau warning of unusual conditions, or special reports issued by the Weather Bureau concerning temperature tables, or news stories warning the public of dangerous roads or streets, within 150 miles of the point of publication, are all acceptable for publication.)

Weather "round-up" stories covering actual conditions throughout more than one State, except when given out by the Weather Bureau.

**PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS:** Photographs conveying the information specified in this summary, unless officially approved for publication.

Detailed maps or photographs disclosing location of munition dumps, or other restricted Army or Naval areas.

**GENERAL:** Casualty lists. (NOTE.—There is no objection to publication of information about casualties from a newspaper's local field, obtained from nearest of kin, but it is requested that in such cases, specific military and naval units, and exact locations, be not mentioned.)

Information disclosing the new location of national archives, art treasures, and so on, which have been moved for safekeeping.

Information about damage to military and naval objectives, including docks, railroads, or commercial airports, resulting from enemy action.

(NOTE.—The spread of rumors in such a way that they will be accepted as facts will render aid and comfort to the enemy. It is suggested that enemy claims of ship sinkings, or of other damage to our forces, be weighed carefully and the source clearly identified, if published.)

Information about the transportation of munitions or other war materials, including oil tank cars and trains.



Information about the movements of the President of United States, or of official military or diplomatic missions of the United States or of any other nation opposing the Axis powers—routes, schedules, or destination, within or without the continental limits of the United States; movements of ranking Army or Naval officers and staffs on official business; movements of other individuals or units under special orders of the Army, Navy or State Department.

The news section of the Broadcaster's Code was identical except in regard to weather. Radio stations were asked to carry no weather information whatsoever except special forecasts which might occasionally be authorized for radio use by the Weather Bureau in the event of unusual or dangerous conditions. This request was based on the knowledge that German submarine commanders in the Atlantic, by triangulation, could readily determine from radio forecasts the weather for their area for the next few days. A few drops of rain at El Paso, high winds at Kansas City, and a snowfall in Detroit could tell them which part of the East Coast soon would have rough weather or fog. Although the details of the weather restrictions in the Press Code eventually were modified, the general principle was retained until the defeat of Germany.

At the time voluntary censorship got under way, the U-boat campaign against shipping along the Atlantic Coast was serious. It was important not only to avoid giving Nazi submarine commanders weather details but also to withhold specific information about ship sinkings. Although honoring the Code request on that point, editors found it difficult to apply this restraining influence when tankers went up in flames outside their harbors or oil-smeared survivors were brought into port with heroic and harrowing stories. Finally an arrangement was worked out with the Navy Department whereby the latter announced these sinkings when survivors reached port, withholding such details as the name and exact type of the ship, which could have been of value to the enemy in checking the success of the undersea warfare. A submarine skipper might or might not know he had scored a hit, and it would be folly to give him and his superiors in Berlin prompt press or radio confirmation of what he had done.

The reasons for the provisions on ship and troop movements were obvious. The Code's request that no information be published or broadcast identifying military units overseas, without appropriate authority, was based on the Army's and Navy's belief that "order of battle" information is always important to the enemy. When the number of American troops outside the country grew to sizable proportions, there was continual pressure, particularly on the smaller papers, to print complete military addresses of soldiers who wanted to receive letters from relatives and friends. The unit was part of this official address, and it was difficult to explain to parents that part of the information required by the Army or Navy should not be published. (In an

effort to educate editors on this point, the Office of Censorship wrote hundreds of letters to publications which thoughtlessly printed military units.) Many papers hit upon a compromise whereby they maintained files of addresses in their offices and gave out individual ones on request, carrying in print only the names of the soldiers and sailors who had gone overseas.

The Code's section concerning war production was of interest in every city where a war plant was located—and that meant virtually every city in the United States. Many newspapermen could not understand at first why they should not publish material which they said was known to thousands of their readers, but the arguments of the military were impressive:

The Germans and the Japanese might not have agents in every community engaged in war production; if these agents had to seek their own information instead of relying on a number of strategic newspapers and trade journals, they would run a greater risk of detection; spies are notorious fakers and rumor mongers, while the published word in the American press would be accepted as authentic and could be used to verify reports by the spies; trained American reporters naturally would have access to facts which the enemy agents as well as the general public would have difficulty in obtaining.

As war production hit its mighty stride, however, preventive steps by the FBI and other agencies made sabotage conspicuous by its absence. Equipment was rolling out of factories so fast that the figures eventually became good propaganda, and Censorship was able to reduce its restrictions to the point where they applied only to new and secret weapons.

The other sections of the Code were self-explanatory. As military conditions changed, some items were deleted or modified and a few new ones were added. Among the latter were intelligence information, movements of enemy ships, diplomatic negotiations affecting military operations, and enemy attacks on continental United States.

Between January 15, 1942 and May 15, 1945 five editions of the Press and Broadcasting Codes were issued. The final issue, distributed after the defeat of Germany, limited the restrictions largely to the Pacific Asiatic theater. The Broadcasting Division also found it necessary, late in 1942, to establish a new edition devoted to the previously mentioned problem of foreign language broadcasts over domestic stations. On March 1, 1943, a code was issued for the guidance of the thousands of radio stations throughout the country operated by Federal, State and Municipal Government agencies, so that everyone concerned would voluntarily cooperate to keep off the air information of military importance, including, so far as possible, weather information.

In addition to the Codes, the Office of Censorship sometimes found it necessary to issue special supplemental requests. These were either of a temporary, emergency nature, or were confidential and therefore could not be included in the Codes.

Many of these special requests concerned trips of the President or of other high American and Allied officials. Their movements

were protected by the "General" section of the Code, but the special requests served to emphasize the need for precautions at specified times.

The first test of this provision came in the spring of 1942 when Soviet Commissar Molotov visited Washington to confer with President Roosevelt. The secret of his presence was so well kept by press and radio that the Director afterward issued a public statement praising their "magnificent performance" in withholding the information. His statement noted that only one newspaper, the Philadelphia Daily News, "broke" the story before the official announcement, and that was only a one-sentence reference on an inside page. This was the only occasion when the Director publicly cited a newspaper as having crossed a Censorship request.

In September, 1942, President Roosevelt made an off-the-record swing across the United States visiting war plants. Washington correspondents who had not been invited to make the trip protested to the Office of Censorship, pointing out that the tour was on the eve of the biennial Congressional elections. The Director replied that the Code provision blacking out movements of the President had been in effect since January as a safety measure, and that if its full purpose was to be served, nothing should be published until the President had returned to Washington and the fact announced. Only one publication—a labor paper on the West Coast which had not received a copy of the special request—mentioned the President's visit before the official announcement.

The effectiveness of voluntary censorship again was demonstrated during the Casablanca conference between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill in January, 1943. The Office of Censorship informed editors and broadcasters confidentially that the President was making "another trip" and that detailed news would be given out on his return. The Germans suspected something was afoot, and their radio propagandists embarked on fishing expeditions, reporting that Roosevelt and Churchill were meeting in London, on a battleship, in Washington. Not once did they hit on Casablanca, however, and the meeting was held in complete security.

The Cairo conference late that year between Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-Shek was not such a well-kept secret, but the fault was not that of domestic voluntary censorship. From Cairo came an advance story not only naming that city as the site but giving the Mena House as the specific meeting place. Since the story was beamed around the world, there was no point in U. S. Censorship holding it back from the American people. Again, just before the release of the official communique at the close of the meeting, Reuters, the British news agency, carried a dispatch saying it was "known definitely" in Lisbon that the Cairo conference was over and that Roosevelt and Churchill were on their way to meet Stalin in Iran.

Other trips by President Roosevelt were kept off the record by voluntary censorship. After the defeat of Germany, White

House officials determined that the need for blacking out presidential movements was not so great, and with the approval of President Truman the voluntary censorship restrictions thereafter were limited to advance information about the routes, times and methods of his travel. Under this provision, for example, editors and broadcasters were expected to withhold news about President Truman's trip to Potsdam for the Big Three meeting in July, 1945, until he actually had embarked. Thereafter it was permissible to disclose that he had departed, but most newspapers were so accustomed to previous restrictions on Presidential movements that they did not take advantage of the relaxation.

News from the battle fronts was filed by correspondents accredited to the Army and the Navy, and the Office of Censorship did not reexamine their dispatches when they arrived in the United States because they had undergone military censorship at the source. But military news originating within the United States was, of course, subject to the voluntary Code. It was especially important that there be no leak, innocent or otherwise, on plans for Allied invasions of enemy territory. The previously cited special note of January, 1944, to editors and broadcasters, cautioning them against disclosing the time and place of the expected invasion of Europe, read in part:

"We need urgently a complete moratorium on back stairs gossip and hairline authenticity regarding this critical battle. Let us have no black market in information so dangerous to American life."

It was difficult to control speculation, but at Censorship's request newspapers and radio stations refrained from pinpointing possible landing spots or indicating the probable time. The result of secrecy was self-evident—the Allies had the advantage of tactical surprise when they landed in Normandy on June 6, 1944. A similar program was carried out later in the year in connection with Allied advances in the Pacific.

Late in 1944 voluntary censorship was presented with a unique problem in connection with the landing of Japanese bomb-carrying balloons in the western part of the United States. These incidents were so scattered at first that they were not immediately recognized as part of a planned attack on American soil. It soon became apparent, however, that these paper balloons, which were released in Japan to float on air currents across the Pacific, might cause severe damage if they landed in congested areas. Consequently, Censorship asked editors and broadcasters not to mention these incidents unless the War Department officially gave out information. There was complete compliance with this request, even when six persons were killed by one of the bombs in Oregon on May 5, 1945. Stories of the tragedy did not disclose the cause.

The Oregon deaths caused considerable concern to the War Department, which instructed the Western Defense Command to begin an "educational campaign" by reading a short statement on the dangers of Japanese balloons to schools, civic clubs and other groups west of the Mississippi River. The statement

warned children and adults against picking up strange objects, and explained that newspapers and broadcasters were cooperating by not mentioning Japanese balloons.

On learning of this program the Office of Censorship informed the War Department that it would be extremely difficult to hold the line as far as voluntary censorship was concerned, because of the fact that the information would become so widespread by word of mouth. Editors reported that young school children were obtaining incorrect impressions from the official statement and were magnifying the dangers. Censorship recommended to the War and Navy Departments that a generalized statement about the balloons be issued to the press and radio, and this was done. Editors and broadcasters thereafter until the end of the war withheld details about specific landings of the balloons. The Japanese received neither information nor comfort about their fantastic scheme to attack the United States.

Voluntary censorship was of particular value in preventing disclosures of new and secret Allied weapons. One of the amazing scientific developments was radar, but for a long period even the word itself was blacked out. Not until the American and British Governments told the detailed story on the day after Japan's surrender was there any widespread dissemination of detailed information about this device.

The best-kept scientific secret of the war was the production of the atomic bomb. On June 28, 1943 the Office of Censorship sent the following confidential message to all daily and weekly newspapers and radio stations in the United States:

"The Codes of Wartime Practices for the American Press and American Broadcasters request that nothing be published or broadcast about 'new or secret military weapons, . . . experiments.' In extension of this highly vital precaution, you are asked not to publish or broadcast any information whatever regarding war experiments involving:

"Production or utilization of atom smashing, atomic energy, atomic fission, atomic splitting, or any of their equivalents.

"The use for military purposes of radium or radioactive materials, heavy water, high voltage discharge equipment, cyclotrons.

"The following elements or any of their compounds: polonium, uranium, ytterbium, hafnium, protactinium, radium, rhenium, thorium, deuterium."

From that date until President Truman announced on August 6, 1945, the dropping of the first atomic bomb on Japan, Censorship kept a constant vigil against any mention of the bomb's development. When even a vague reference to atomic experiments was uncovered, a courteous letter explaining the importance of avoiding discussion was sent at once to the author. Comic strips picturing great scientific advances were cautioned lest they accidentally come too close to the truth.

The test of the new weapon in a New Mexico desert three weeks before its actual use against the enemy failed to arouse any undue reportorial interest. The flash was seen at great distances, but the Army passed it off as an explosion of a remote ammunition dump.

The two-year voluntary blackout was effective. This was due in part to the fact that Major General L. R. Groves, in charge of the project, took the Office of Censorship into his confidence. On the day Japan surrendered, General Groves wrote the Director:

"May I express my gratitude to you, the members of your staff, and through you, to all the members of the American press and radio who have been so cooperative in withholding information concerning the atomic bomb project. I would be happy if you could inform the press and radio of my feelings."

The value of the self-censorship program, however, rested not alone on a few spectacular achievements, such as the preservation of secrecy about the atomic bomb and invasion preparations, but on the continuous day by day restraint displayed by editors and broadcasters. It kept an inestimable amount of information from the enemy and thereby saved the lives of countless American and Allied soldiers, sailors and marines.

The efficiency of voluntary censorship demonstrated that results could be obtained without the backing of a law and without threats or penalties. Great Britain and Canada, while describing their press censorship as voluntary on the ground that there was no authority to interfere prior to publication, actually could punish editors for publishing restricted information. This conceivably covered not only disclosure of information but also editorial expression. Both of those countries prosecuted a few editors, and both experienced the same difficulties with inadvertent errors as did the United States. The presence of laws on the statute books did not automatically protect military information.

The American program was based on these principles:

1. Voluntary censorship must deal only with questions involving war security.
2. It must never base a request on any security consideration which may be questionable. The danger to security must be real, and must be backed by a solid and reasonable explanation.
3. It must avoid any interference whatever with editorial opinion. Such opinion could not possibly be controlled on a voluntary basis, even if it were desirable.
4. It must never be influenced by non-security considerations of policy or public needs. Any involvement in these fields would destroy effectiveness elsewhere.
5. It must make no requests which would put the press in the position of policing or withholding from publication the utterances of responsible public officials.
6. It must make every effort to avoid multiple censorship and on no account must withhold from the American public any information which has been generally disseminated abroad.

7. It must never undertake to vouch for the truth or accuracy of any news story. The embarrassments would be too great for a voluntary system, based on security, to survive.

8. It must never undertake to regulate release dates or other matters of newspaper ethics. To do so would encourage Government interference of a considerable and possibly uncontrollable character.

9. It must be absolutely impartial and consistent. If any censor is to maintain a position of influence, his blue pencil must know no brother among competitors.

10. It must operate openly, advising the public of every request made of the press. To do otherwise would undermine public confidence and foster unwarranted suspicion both against the Government and the press.

Thus the unique experiment conducted by the American press and radio was a heartening example of democracy at work. It was effective, and its principle was in keeping with the best interest of our free institutions.

## V

Censorship's achievements during World War II are impressive. They are also immeasurable, for there is no set value on helping to preserve the American lives and individual liberties which were imperiled by powerful totalitarian enemies throughout the conflict.

Defensively, thousands of items of information endangering the nation's security were kept out of the press and off the radio by editors and broadcasters under the voluntary censorship program. Other countless pieces of intelligence were deleted by Censorship from international communications before they could be passed along to Berlin or Tokyo.

In its offensive operations Censorship provided Government agencies with intercepted information which would aid in the prosecution of the war. It helped weave a bright pattern of accomplishments in such fields as counter-espionage and economic warfare.

In November, 1942 a great fleet of American ships landed thousands of troops and mountains of supplies on the North African coast, and the first large-scale American invasion proceeded with marked success. It came, of course, only after months of careful and extensive planning, and the assembling and routing of so many men, of so much equipment and of the enormous ship convoy had involved necessary disclosures to a certain number of people. Yet the entire project was kept secret from the public, and so far as is known the enemy was in complete ignorance about it until the ships appeared off the Spanish coast.

Following the initial victories in North Africa, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill held their crucial meeting in Casablanca. The wall of secrecy around preparations for



this meeting likewise remained unbreached, and even as the conferees were deliberating well within the range of Nazi bombers, the Berlin radio was frantically putting out feelers by placing the conference here and there, but not in Casablanca.

Censorship had helped to keep the enemy guessing about the North African invasion and the Casablanca Conference, but tremendous events were still ahead, such as the invasion of France on June 6, 1944. Details of the extraordinary censorship precautions that preceded D-Day have already been recounted. The precautions were uniformly successful.

Equally successful were Censorship's many months of watchfulness to preserve the secret of the atomic bomb. This sustained effort, lasting more than two years, was rewarded after the first bomb fell on Japan by the universal reference to the atomic project as the best-kept secret of the war. This achievement was also the result of combined labors by all the censoring divisions and, in addition, by teamwork between British, Canadian and United States Censorships.

The North African and D-Day invasions, the Casablanca Conference and the atomic bomb developments naturally are only highlights in a record of hour-by-hour and day-by-day vigilance of thousands of censors. The U. S. Censorship Regulations and the Codes for the American Press and Radio listed restricted items of information that endangered security, i.e., movements of ships and planes, disposition and character of Allied troops, locations and strength of Allied military installations, even conditions of weather, that might help the enemy plan his attacks or better defend himself. But to the individual censor fell the prodigious responsibility of interpretation and application, for no two cables or letters were alike, nor were news stories written by different authors.

Most of the communications containing dangerous information were written without dangerous intent, but to the enemy an innocent disclosure would have been as welcome as a premeditated one. The seaman who cabled his wife when and at what port she should address her answering letter may have been only eager to speed up his communications with home, but he failed to consider that his own life and those of his shipmates were part of the forfeit to be paid if the information reached a U-boat commander. A merchant seaman told his family in California, for instance, not only when his ship would set sail but also that it would carry 7,800,000 gallons of gasoline.

Some security leaks which Censorship took pains to plug came in wholesale lots. Six different marines, all on the same ship, wrote that they were off Guadalcanal and would soon proceed to the Russells, 70 miles away. On another ship, in another port, five Americans wrote details of their vessel's cargo, its destination and when it would arrive there. In July, 1944 an Army man in the Southwest Pacific described the movements of the 32nd Infantry Division. A few days later a civilian in California sent abroad a letter in which he told of the combat damage to a U. S. battleship which had docked in Bremerton.



Not all communications, however, were obviously discernable as imperiling security. In the summer of 1943 a former Pearl Harbor worker filed a cable from Honolulu in which he gave two dates. The censor suspected the use of a private code to inform the addressee that the sender was leaving Hawaii for the continental United States on August 10 and expected to reach the mainland ten days later. A check disclosed that the sender did indeed have reservations to leave on August 10. He was stopped at the dock by Navy Intelligence, hauled before a provost judge, and fined \$200.

This was an instance wherein defensive and offensive censorship overlapped, but the important point was to detect the damaging information and kill it. In New Zealand another evasion was attempted, by inserting a letter between the pages of a magazine which was mailed to Utah. The sender explained in the hidden letter that the enclosure was designed to avoid censorship, a fact which was entirely apparent to the censor. More illuminating was the sender's lengthy discussion of ship movements, ship sinkings, combat between American and Japanese vessels, and so on. He was fined 40 pounds in a New Zealand court.

One woman tried to get a letter past Censorship by concealing it in a basket of flowers which she carried off a plane at an American airport. She paid a \$40 fine for censorship evasion. Others tried to smuggle documents by hiding them in their clothes; shoes were favorite places of concealment. One of the few jail sentences for censorship evasion resulted from such an attempt in Panama, where the evader was imprisoned for 60 days.

In no other field of operations did the concept of global censorship function more effectively and dramatically than in the unified attack of Allied Censorship against the secret communications of the enemy. Even before the United States entered the war, British Imperial Censorship at its strategic Bermuda station had cracked the secret ink and cipher systems of several German agents in the Western Hemisphere and had placed in the hands of the Federal Bureau of Investigation documentary evidence which led to the conviction of secret agents and to the disruption of the enemy espionage system.

Shortly before the United States entered the war, chemists at the Bermuda station were engaged one day in a routine check of all mail from the Western Hemisphere to neutral Europe in order to select non-watch listed mail for laboratory testing. A normal business letter from Havana, Cuba, to a business firm in Lisbon caught the chemist's eye. It appeared completely legitimate and innocuous, but some sixth sense caused him to include the letter in the stack for the day's routine inspection. Chemical reagents indicated the presence of invisible ink and the entire letter was developed. Within a few days, the sorters picked out another letter written in similar handwriting but purportedly from a different person to another Lisbon firm. The chemist's tests brought out a secret message headed "No. 4" and two new names were placed on the watch list. But it was a sorter three weeks later who noted that a letter addressed to still another business house,

this time in Bilbao, Spain, had the characteristic handwriting which was of such interest to the laboratory. Letter number 5 appeared under the chemist's treatment, and the secret message, incidentally, pleaded for a new stock of secret ink.

The cover letters in each case were natural and convincing. Ostensibly from a commercial agent attempting to secure representation in Havana of the firm in Europe to which he was writing, the visible text would have excited no comment or action from an automatic censorship examination. But Censorship's methods were neither automatic nor unimaginative. Each letter with the distinctive handwriting which had been described to the sorters came to one trained examiner before going to the laboratory. She noted that the sender's name varied frequently and that the business mentioned in the letters never seemed to materialize. Censorship analysis showed that one of the business firms to which the letters were addressed was owned by a known German agent; the second and third companies could not be found in any standard business directory.

Message No. 36 arrived on schedule in the Bermuda laboratory on May 29, 1942. The U. S. Office of Censorship by this time had started its secret ink laboratories and, in July, 1942, the New York station developed the secret ink in a letter from the Havana source to a new intermediary in Bilbao, Spain. Shortly afterward, the New York laboratory found in the sea mail to Havana a letter containing the identical secret message which had been in another letter intercepted in the clipper mail at Bermuda.

The Havana agent was becoming uneasy. He complained in his secret messages that he had not heard from his superiors and, on August 22, 1942, he wrote in the open cover letter that he "agreed to the proposal to suspend commercial operations immediately." On the back of this letter was written Secret Ink Letter No. 48, the last one intercepted from him.

On September 5, 1942, the Cuban police arrested Heinz August Luning, who had been identified as the writer of the secret messages. Luning had a German father and an Italian mother. He had been trained in the Hamburg spy school and had arrived in Havana at the end of September, 1941. Hence he had been operating for less than a month when his secret espionage reports were discovered by Censorship.

Luning was tried before a Cuban military court. On November 10, 1942, he dropped before a firing squad of the Cuban army.

Luning's correspondence inadvertently led Censorship to the key which solved another espionage case. The names of all intermediaries or mail drops used by Luning were placed on the watch lists of Allied Censorship. Early in February, 1942 a letter from New York to one of the addresses in Bilbao, Spain was sent in routine by the Censorship receiving section in the Bermuda station to the station laboratory.

The letter appeared innocuous and bore the return address of "Fred Lewis." The laboratory developed a secret message written in German with the same type of ink used by Luning in the

latter stages of his activity. The secret message was numbered 16 and consisted of a report on shipping in United States ports.

Another intercept was dated Feb. 4, 1942, and the return address gave "Fred Sloane" as the writer, but laboratory tests showed the same technique, and the signature in secret writing was "Fred Lewis." The secret message in part asked "Are my addresses in Lisbon, Bilbao, and Winterthur known to others in USA?" Censorship knew from previous intercepts the Lisbon and Bilbao mail drops, but Lewis had gratuitously given them an additional lead.

Through February and March of 1942 "Lewis" continued his correspondence but his secret messages indicated he was becoming increasingly nervous. Finally, on April 11 "Lewis" wrote two letters to his mail drops in Portugal and Winterthur and concluded his secret message with the plaintive statement, "I am losing the house at the end of April as, in accordance with your wishes, all occupants have been given notice and I am without a job since my illness.—Heil Hitler."

These were the last letters sent by "Fred Lewis," but the FBI had enough evidence to complete its case. The cover letters suggested that the writer had been in Lisbon recently and his probable entry into the United States was narrowed to a period of a few months. Baggage declarations of passengers from Portugal were compared with the handwriting of the secret messages, and the search produced the declaration of Ernest Frederick Lehmitz of Tompkinsville, New York, who had passed through Bermuda in March, 1941 and had described himself to Travelers' Censorship as a rubber salesman returning to the United States where he had been naturalized in 1924. He had worked for the German Consulate in New York prior to the war.

Lehmitz was arrested June 27, 1943, on a charge of violating the wartime espionage act. He had lived in Staten Island for many years and had been zealous as an air-raid warden in his neighborhood. Lehmitz took in roomers and was partial to naval men as tenants. His occupation as a porter in a Port Richmond restaurant frequented by sailors and defense workers provided him with many pithy items which appeared in secret inks under censorship testing.

The day after Lehmitz' arrest, the FBI took into custody Erwin Harry de Spretter, a mechanical engineer and formerly a lieutenant in the German Army, who supplied Lehmitz with information and had secured a handbook on Brewster bombers which Lehmitz forwarded to Germany. Both men pleaded guilty and on September 28, 1943, were sentenced to 30 years imprisonment, the maximum allowed by law.

In April, 1942 Bermuda Censorship spotted a letter addressed to the intermediary in Winterthur whom Lehmitz had used, but the handwriting and physical characteristics of the letter were quite different from those of Lehmitz, whose espionage correspondence had been studied in every detail by the specialists in the Censorship counter-espionage section. Chemical treatment however, brought out a secret message dealing with Allied plane production and explosives. The secret ink was new and of a

high quality, the technique showed skill and training, the cover letter was natural and convincing. The work of a new secret agent had been uncovered.

The secret ink message was headed "Number 6" and the signature appeared to be "R. O. Gerson." There were no clues to identify the newly discovered secret agent, but the Censorship watch was rewarded about six weeks later when secret message Number 7 was intercepted. The sender's name was given as "R. L. Erskine" although the letter was signed "Roger." Nevertheless the characteristics of secret writing technique stamped it indelibly as from the same origin as Number 6.

For a long period there were no intercepts from the new agent but finally a letter in the same handwriting was received. It was addressed to a mail drop in Spain, fortunately a suspicious one which had long been on the Censorship watch list, and it was rushed to the laboratory. Secret writing appeared, but the message was Number 10. Two espionage messages apparently had slipped through among the thousands of innocent epistles in the mail.

Message No. 11 soon followed, addressed to another mail drop this one in Lisbon. "Gerson" indicated in secret writing that he was becoming apprehensive and his intermediaries in the United States were refusing to receive his mail. He advised his principals to write no more.

Secret letter No. 12 showed him even more disturbed: "May have to flee now. If alive will write when possible—will be in army shortly if not in jail."

It was not until January 11, 1944, that the trap was sprung on Count Wilhelm Albrecht von Pressentin Gennant von Rautter, as the writer of the "Gerson" letters. He had a colorful history. His father was a German count and his mother an Englishwoman. Von Rautter was born in Germany, had become a naturalized American citizen and once worked for the Department of Agriculture. Visiting Germany in 1940, von Rautter was recruited for the German Intelligence Service "almost at pistol point," so he declared. He visited Mexico twice before America entered the war, once to secure additional supplies of secret ink.

Skillful agent though he was, von Rautter cracked completely when confronted with the evidence of his secret ink letters developed by Censorship chemists. He entered a plea of guilty, and on October 10, 1944, was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Velvalee Malvena Blucher Dickinson was born in California and attended Stanford University. She worked in a San Francisco brokerage house, specializing in Japanese accounts, and became a member of the Japanese American Society of San Francisco. She was cultivated in Japanese circles and was entertained on board a Japanese warship in San Francisco Bay. But Mrs. Dickinson's affairs did not prosper and, when her husband died, she moved to New York where she opened an exclusive doll shop on Madison Avenue. Her wares were popular, and she soon developed a profitable and legitimate business which extended to many clients all over the world.

Mrs. Dickinson then evolved a plan of communicating with Buenos Aires, a notorious center of Axis espionage. Using the names of various clients of her shop in the return address of each letter, Mrs. Dickinson wrote five letters to a Senora Inez de Molinali, 2563 O'Higgins, Buenos Aires. Characterized as they were by flagrant misspellings, odd punctuation and erratic statements, the letters were no more peculiar than hundreds of innocuous communications passing through Censorship daily and were not the type which would arouse the suspicion of an examiner.

But Velvalee Dickinson committed two errors. The first was that the correct name of her "mail drop" was Molinari instead of Molinali. The second error was that she used the wrong street address. Back to the innocent clients of the doll shop came the letters, marked by the Argentina Post Office with the Spanish equivalent of "Not at this Address." Puzzled by the forgery of their names to letters which they did not write, two of the clients reported the mystery to the FBI. Mrs. Dickinson's name promptly went on the Censorship watch list.

In the five significant letters to Buenos Aires, purportedly discussing the sale of dolls, Mrs. Dickinson apparently attempted to convey information on the condition and location of Allied war vessels on the Pacific coast, which she visited frequently on business. The code was built around the use of "doll" as "ship."

Mrs. Dickinson pleaded guilty to a charge of Censorship evasion, and was given the maximum sentence of ten years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

The case of Victor Sepelev is an example of the effectiveness of a combined, aggressive Allied Censorship operating to prevent the success of an enemy agent. Victor Sepelev, a White Russian with German connections, mailed from Buenos Aires a secret ink message intercepted by the British Censorship Station at Trinidad. It stated that his activities had been paralyzed by the interrogation of Travelers' Censorship as he entered the Western Hemisphere and by the denunciation of a fellow passenger. Nothing in the letter served to identify Sepelev, but by coordinated exchange of information between the Trinidad station and the U. S. Censorship station at San Juan, Puerto Rico, the latter almost simultaneously intercepted a love letter to Sepelev which identified the secret ink writer. Sepelev attempted to escape, first to Paraguay and later through Buenos Aires to Spain. His movements traced by Censorship through his letters and cables, his every letter analyzed by a correlated Censorship attack, Victor Sepelev died in Buenos Aires on January 11, 1945, of an alleged "heart attack."

While the Federal Bureau of Investigation was using Censorship information to build up its cases against enemy agents, Allied military authorities were also employing intercepts to help plan their attacks against the enemy. One of the most spectacular and carefully contrived operations of the war was the aerial bombing of German dams in the Rhine area many months before Allied troops actually went into Germany. The plan was to destroy the dams and thus flood a vital enemy industrial

area, but to do this the Royal Air Force needed information on the exact engineering details of the dams. Much of the data was obtained from Censorship—not through any one intercept from any one station but by piecing together many intercepts, both cable and postal, which were supplied by United States as well as British Censorship. When the attack came off, it was eminently successful.

In 1943 Allied planes dropped explosives on the oil refineries and the seaplane base which the enemy was using at Berre, France, after Censorship intercepts had helped form a picture of the installation there. And in the same year U. S. Censorship prepared a submission showing that the Germans were utilizing the natural advantages of the Hague Forest, in the Netherlands capital, for constructing defenses. Allied bombers reacted so effectively that, as a subsequent intercept disclosed, "The Hague Forest has disappeared completely."

Of all the material reported by Censorship, the largest category comprised intercepts of value to the prosecution of economic warfare. This was natural, in view of the volume of business correspondence which flowed through the Censorship stations. But in reporting information to the agencies concerned with economic warfare, notably the Foreign Economic Administration, the Treasury and State Departments and the War Production Board, Censorship took pains not to obstruct legitimate trade which was of course important to the whole war effort.

Thousands of intercepts were produced by Censorship to strengthen Allied war production and to weaken the enemy's. Here some evaluation in terms of dollars and cents is possible. A single intercept enabled the War Production Board to obtain \$25,000,000 worth of much-needed textiles. One communication saved the Government \$11,000,000 by disclosing the possibility of a more favorable price on Mexican alcohol. About \$2,000,000 worth of dragline dredges, galoshes, cocoa, cattle hair and other diversified commodities were obtained on the basis of Censorship material which provided the tip-off on where the goods were located. In one instance, Censorship information enabled the Government to save \$243,800 in compensation payment for a shipment of copra, which it had seized.

Letters intercepted in New York and Miami told of a large quinine transfer from a firm in Ecuador to one in Europe. Quinine was desperately needed by the Armed Forces to control malaria among the troops in the Pacific, and the United States Government had contracted for all that Ecuador might sell abroad. Investigation disclosed that the purchasing firm was smuggling quinine to a black market for cold tablets. A U. S. Navy destroyer promptly was dispatched from a convoy to seize the precious cargo on the high seas.

It was disclosed through Censorship that a stockpile of aluminum ingots had been loaded at New York for Marseilles but had been diverted to Casablanca. The Combined Raw Materials Board was thereby able to requisition this valuable material for the British. Large quantities of surplus U. S. machinery were found stored in warehouses in Turkey. A cable unearthed the

proposed importation of 50 tons of kapok by a firm in New York. The War Production Board promptly investigated, and the material was made available to the Navy for life jackets.

While rummaging for supplies for Uncle Sam to buy, Censorship exposed enormous quantities of desperately needed goods within the United States. A single intercept, for example, showed that an American firm was about to send 290,000 meters of tungsten wire to Mexico. At that time the country faced the danger of a nation-wide dimout because of a shortage of tungsten for lamps. Furthermore, tungsten wire was needed by the British for their radar equipment. The War Production Board, acting on Censorship's information, was able to divert the big shipment to more urgent uses. One letter showed an offer to sell 3,600 field telephones, stored in a New York warehouse, to a firm in Latin America. They had been declared surplus from the last war, and now the War Department was able to buy them back.

An assortment of industrial diamonds about to be sold in Mexico by an American dealer's agent was reported by Censorship to Government officials who took immediate steps to acquire the stones for war production. Censorship information enabled the Government to halt a shipment of vitally-needed zinc, first disclosed by an intercept, which was turned back on the high seas. A stock of 4,800 pounds of mica was found in New York City, and an order of 3,000 tons of pulp, scheduled for export, was cancelled when the Government, duly informed by Censorship, moved in.

Large benefits resulted when Censorship directed attention to the distribution and use of materials exported by the United States to help friendly countries. Critical materials were rigidly allocated among such countries. Purported nitrogen shortages in Spain, for instance, were used by businessmen there to plead for more nitrogen shipments, but the shortages were proved false by intercepted communications showing heavy shipments from South America to Spanish buyers. Complaints were made in Chile that sodium nitrate markets were failing, but Censorship showed Chilean exports of sodium nitrate had actually increased and extra purchases by the United States were therefore denied. Purchases of equipment for mining in the Belgian Congo were accelerated when an intercepted comment came before interested officials.

Censorship proved almost indispensable as a check on business activities harmful to the war effort. A case in point was the illicit traffic in parcel post shipments between the United States and other countries, notably the Near East, where a rich market awaited anyone who could get goods through American export controls. The Foreign Economic Administration, acting on Censorship information, caused the withholding from dispatch and actual seizure of parcel post packages valued at more than \$100,000. FEA sent out more than 10,000 warning letters in cases based on Censorship material. In March, 1942, when Censorship was only some three months old, a mail shipment of some \$2,000 worth of high-speed twist drills was intercepted at the Mexican

Border after Censorship relayed the information about it to the Government. About \$200,000 worth of merchandise, contained in 6,500 parcel post packages addressed to the Near East, was returned to the senders because they violated export regulations, but seizure was not warranted. Censorship also played an important role in the enforcement of controls over pharmaceutical shipments to China.

Import controls, too, were aided by Censorship, as in the case of an offer of 5,000 tons of linseed to an American concern by an Argentine company. In a telephone conversation, duly monitored and reported by Censorship, the Argentine seller said, "You don't need to tell Washington about this." Another telephone conversation, between individuals in Cuba and the United States, revealed a plan to violate import regulations in the shipment of a large quantity of syrup. An intercept initiated War Production Board action to conserve vital shipping space when it showed an Argentine concern had made misrepresentations to obtain transport for a large cargo of wool to the United States.

Information supplied by Censorship served as an accurate estimate of the productive capacity of cement mills used by the Japanese in China. Intercepts provided up-to-date data on power plants, petroleum installations and tobacco processing facilities in Japanese-held Shanghai. The location and activities of a large coal mine, operated by the Japanese in China, were uncovered by Censorship, which also gave the key to prevailing prices on important consumer goods in occupied China. Censorship material offered details on the coal situation in recently devastated areas in Italy and Sardinia. It gave proof of reports that meat production in Denmark was increasing.

There were manifold instances where Censorship was able to produce information backing up enforcement of the economic blockade against the enemy. One intercept disclosed a copper ore shipment from Chile to Japan, and another message told of contraband diamonds on a Swiss steamer and described in detail just where they were hidden. Still another intercept, one of many relating to smuggling of precious stones, revealed an attempt to take 400 grams of them through the blockade.

For many months Censorship examined the communications of Harold Ebury, a British citizen who entered the United States from the Far East. Gradually the pattern of a code he was using in his cable and radio messages took shape. Using a fish liver business to mask his activities, Ebury employed the words "funds," "cloth" and "gonlaca" to mean platinum, and "dollars" to mean grams. Ebury was arrested in 1943 on a charge of violating Censorship Regulations. He confessed to using the code and was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment.

Brass ingots, machine tools, sausage casings, hides, foods of all kinds, ball bearings, steel, oil, crude rubber, castor beans, resins, silk, and rare metals—these were some of the items, valuable enough to the enemy to figure in his attempts at outwitting the blockade, on which Censorship reported when the deals involving them appeared suspicious. One group of inter-



cepts showed how little by little funds had been provided to build up a stock of goods at a Latin American port. This case had a dramatic ending when a German blockade runner connected with the deal was captured at sea.

Although Allied military successes in 1944 largely solved the blockade problem, by physically sealing off the neutral gateways through which the enemy was penetrating the blockade, Censorship continued until the war's end to supply material of assistance to the Government's campaign against enemy safehaven and underground activities. It was through these activities that the enemy, in the face of defeat, tried to salvage his assets and prepare himself for a continuation or resurgence of his war-making.

At one time, according to an FEA official, 60 per cent of the cases of violations of export licenses were discovered through Censorship. One of these was the case against Anton Smit & Co., industrial diamond exporters who transferred their business from Belgium to the United States because of the war. An intercepted letter from the company to a Swedish firm tipped off FEA that the company was smuggling out industrial diamonds in the shanks of oversized drills. The letter advised the recipient to dip the drills in an acid bath. This, however, seemed harsh treatment for the drills. It was eventually learned that the acid treatment was necessary to melt bronze plugs in the drills. Under the plugs would be found the smuggled diamonds. The Government took the matter to court and Leonard J. A. Smit, the president of the American firm, was sentenced to a year in jail. His company was heavily fined.

The Proclaimed List of Certain Blocked Nationals was one of the strongest economic weapons. All the names on the list, as well as names on the Statutory List, which was the British equivalent, were carried on the United States Censorship Watch List. Censorship thereby could identify communications involving blacklisted subjects and act on them accordingly. One of Censorship's greatest contributions in this regard was to supply material indicating that blacklisted parties were using cloaks to hide their activities. A Nicaraguan on the Proclaimed List, for instance, became outraged at the exorbitant fee his cloak was demanding for serving as an intermediary. The Nicaraguan wrote a friend about it. Censorship notified the State Department, and the cloak's name was added to the Proclaimed List. An American exporter was discovered, through intercepts, to be paying Proclaimed Listed firms in Spain for obtaining Spanish import licenses for him. He was dealing with them through an intermediary, whose name thereupon was added to the list. The American exporter himself was denied further export licenses.

Early in the war Censorship helped in the Government's efforts to stamp out the German ransom racket. The Germans were offering relatives in the United States of people held in German concentration camps the opportunity of ransoming them for large sums. The funds were to be paid to agents in neutral countries, and thereby the Germans would get badly needed foreign exchange. Censorship intercepts helped disclose these attempts to traffick in human beings. Upon the Treasury

Department's recommendation, seven persons in Switzerland were added to the Proclaimed List because intercepts showed they were serving as intermediaries in this unsavory racket. While studying Censorship submissions, the Treasury also noticed that quite a few pertained to enemy trade transactions involving individuals in Turkey. On the basis of these findings, the addition of five names to the Proclaimed List was recommended.

The intercepts assisting the work of United States Foreign Funds Control turned up many attempts to circumvent controls that were necessary to keep the enemy from obtaining financial resources. One intercept revealed a triangular trade arrangement between individuals in Germany, Turkey and the United States by which blocked dollars were unblocked and sold for a premium, possibly to the enemy's benefit. In another instance Censorship material showed that a considerable amount of money, sent to the Bank of China, was intended for beneficiaries in Japanese-occupied territory. Thanks in large part to Censorship information, the Treasury blocked millions of dollars of property of pro-enemy persons.

The results of Censorship's work which have been set forth here were the highlights of its 44 months of operations. The record ended, of course, with the arrival of the final Allied victory when all censoring activities of the Office of Censorship were terminated.